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A
COMPANION FOR THE ALTAR;

OR

WEEK'S PREPARATION

FOR THE

HOLY COMMUNION:

CONSISTING OF

A SHORT EXPLANATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

AND

MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS

PROPER TO BE USED BEFORE AND DURING THE RECEIVING OF THE

HOLY COMMUNION;

ACCORDING TO THE FORM PRESCRIBED BY THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BY JOHN HENRY HOBART, D. D.

Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New-York.

STEREOTYPED BY A. CHANDLER.

NEW-YORK:

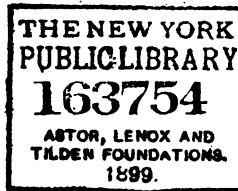
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Southern District of New-York, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the twenty-third day of June, in the forty-third year of the Independence of the United

[L. s.] States of America, *T. & J. Swords*, of the said District, have deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, to wit :

A Companion for the Altar; or Week's Preparation for the Holy Communion : Consisting of a short Explanation of the Lord's Supper, and Meditations and Prayers proper to be used before and during the receiving of the Holy Communion; according to the Form prescribed by the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. By John Henry Hobart, D. D. Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New-York. The fourth edition, revised and corrected.

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GILBERT LIVINGSTON THOMPSON,

Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

By **EDWARD TRENOR**, Ass't Clerk, &c.

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PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

IN the explanation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper prefixed to this work, the author has endeavoured to use, as much as possible, the words of the Church in her Catechism and Office for the Communion.* In this introductory treatise he has also made free use of an excellent Tract on the Holy Communion, by Bishop Gibson, and of a Sermon of the late Bishop Seabury, on the same subject; and when he quoted their sentiments, he thought it proper to use nearly their language. As quotations from others are thus incorporated with remarks of his own, a variety of style may possibly be observed in this part of the work. It is necessary also to remark, that the devotions to be used at the administration of the Holy Communion, are not

* And, in doing this, he has taken for his guide a short Explanation of the Lord's Supper in the New Week's Preparation.

all of them entirely original. But for the rest of the work, the meditations and prayers to be used in the week *before* the receiving of the Communion, the author is *solely* responsible.

In the following pages the writer has endeavoured to keep in view two principles, which he deems most important and fundamental. These principles are—That we are saved from the guilt and dominion of sin by the divine merits and grace of a crucified Redeemer; and that the merits and grace of this Redeemer are applied to the soul of the believer in the devout and humble participation of the ordinances of the Church, administered by a priesthood who derive their authority by regular transmission from Christ, the Divine Head of the Church, and the source of all the power in it. These are the principles which, at first promulgated by the apostles, “in demonstration of the spirit and with power,” constituted the glory of the primitive Church—that Church, which was watered by the tears and blood of confessors and martyrs. These are the principles which, though in the present age unhappily disregarded and contemned, will again be cherished with sacred and inviolable ardour when it shall please the Divine and Almighty Head of the Church to restore her to her original purity and perfection. Could Christians be persuaded heartily to embrace these principles, and to regulate their faith and

PREFACE.

conduct by them, the Church would be rescued, on the one hand, from those baneful opinions which are reducing the Gospel to a cold, unfruitful, and comfortless system of heathen morals; and, on the other, from that wild spirit of enthusiasm and irregular zeal which, contemning the divinely constituted government and priesthood of the Church, is destroying entirely her order, unity, and beauty, and undermining the foundations of sound and sober piety.

It may possibly be objected to the strain of devotion in this work, that it is *visionary* and *enthusiastic*. But surely devotional writings, in order to engage and interest the affections, ought to be, in some degree at least, fervent and animated. The devotional strains of the sweet psalmist of Israel breathe the rapturous spirit of those celestial courts to which they are designed to lead the soul. If it be necessary to descend from sacred to human authority—the appeal may be made to the primitive fathers, who poured forth their devotional feelings in language the most ardent and impassioned. The divines of the Church of England, who imbibed their principles and their piety at the pure fountain of the primitive Church, are distinguished for their lively and animating fervour. The writings of the venerable Bishop Andrews, of Bishop Taylor, Bishop Kenn, Bishop Hall, Dean Hicke, Dean Stanhope, Bishop Wilson,—(the enu-

meration might be extended)—and the late eloquent and pious Bishop Horne, not less instruct by sound and forcible reasoning, than animate and warm by the sacred fervour which pervades them. Far be it from the writer, humble in attainments as in years, to presume to range himself, even in the lowest seat, with these eminently distinguished servants of the sanctuary. Happy may he esteem himself, if, from the study of their works, which, next to the inspired volume, he cherishes as the invaluable standard of his principles, and the animating guide of his devotions, he has caught even a feeble spark of ~~that~~ celestial spirit which made them *burning and shining lights* in the Church on earth, and has prepared them for the highest seats of glory in the Church Triumphant.

For the errors and imperfections which he fears will be found in the work, he must offer as his best, though (he is sensible) feeble apology; that from some *unavoidable* circumstances, the work, amidst the pressure of professional duties, was written and printed with a haste and rapidity that prevented those frequent and careful corrections, by which only a young and humble writer can hope to attain accuracy and excellence.

That the work, notwithstanding its imperfections; may tend to excite the attention of the careless to that inestimable ordinance which is the means and pledge of the Sa-

viour's grace and mercy—that it may aid the Christian to receive, with lively penitence, gratitude, and faith, the hallowed symbols of the body and blood of his blessed Redeemer, by which he is to be nourished and strengthened unto everlasting life—is the humble but earnest prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

New-York, May, 1804.



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THE
USEFULNESS OF ACTUAL PREPARATION
BEFORE RECEIVING
THE LORD'S SUPPER.

(From Dr. Waterland.)

OUR esteem or disesteem of this holy sacrament will best be seen by our preparing or not preparing for it as we ought. There is something of a *preparation* of heart, mind, and ways, required for all religious offices, much more for this, which is the flower and perfection of all.

“As to the *length* of time to be taken in *preparing*, there is no one certain rule to be *given*, which can suit all cases or circumstances: only, when a man has competently adjusted his accounts with God, (be it sooner or later,) then he is fit to come, and not till then.

“There is an *habitual*, and there is an *actual* preparation. The *habitual* preparation is a *good life*; and the further we are advanced in it, the less need there is of any *actual* preparation besides. But, because men are too apt to flatter and deceive their *own hearts*, and to speak *peace* to themselves without sufficient ground for so doing; therefore some *actual* preparation, self-examination, &c. is generally necessary, even to those who may be *habitually* good, if it be only to give them a *well-grounded* assurance that they really are so.

“It were to be wished there were not many amongst us who have a great deal to consider.

12 PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.

of beforehand; many offences to correct, many disorders to set right, much to do, and much to undo, before they presume to come to God's altar.

“*Fault* has been sometimes found with these little treatises of *Weekly Preparation*: I think, without reason. They are *exceedingly useful in their kind*.—It may be happy for them who need none of these helps: but they that *least* need them, are not the men, generally, who most *despise* them. None of us, perhaps, are so perfect as not to want, at some seasons, some such hints for recollection, or helps to devotion. It is well for common Christians, that they are provided *with useful manuals of that kind*. They that are well disposed, will make use of them as often as they need them, and will at all times give God thanks and praises for them.”

To the above judicious remarks it may be proper to add, that Christians should omit no opportunity of receiving the holy eucharist, even when it has not been in their power to go through the usual previous preparation.

He who sincerely endeavours to serve his God and Saviour, is always prepared to receive the Lord's Supper. And he should thankfully embrace every opportunity of commemorating, in this sacred ordinance, the love of his blessed Redeemer, and of receiving fresh supplies of grace to quicken and strengthen *him in his Christian course*.

SHORT INTRODUCTION
TO THE
LORD'S SUPPER,
STATING
THE NATURE OF THE ORDINANCE, AND THE
NECESSARY PREPARATION FOR IT.*

THE Church in the catechism informs us, that *Christ has ordained only two sacraments, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.* Baptism was instituted by Christ, to be the right of admission into his Church,† and is answerable to circumcision among the Jews.‡ The *Lord's Supper* was ordained as a memorial of the sacrifice of the death of Christ,§ and ap-

* See the introductory paragraph in the preface.

† Go ye therefore and teach all nations, *baptizing* them. *Matt.* xxviii. 19. Then they that gladly received the word were baptized; and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. *Acts* ii. 41.

‡ In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. *Col.* ii. 11, 12.

§ For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. *1 Cor.* xi. 23—25.

pointed by him instead of the *Jewish* passover.* These sacraments are both *necessary* to *salvation*. *Baptism* is *necessary*, being the ordinance whereby we are regenerated, that is, are translated from our natural state into a state of grace, and *born again* to a title to all the privileges of the Gospel covenant.† The *Lord's Supper* is necessary, because it conveys that spiritual food by which we are nourished to everlasting life. The former is to be only *once*, the latter *often* received.

These ordinances the Church considers as only *generally*, and not *absolutely*, necessary to salvation. She does not take upon her to exclude all hope of God's mercy, in those extraordinary cases, where the want of opportunity or capacity, or the force of involuntary error prevents men from receiving the sacraments. But as the *Jews* were obliged, under the severest penalty, to be circumcised,‡ and keep the passover;§ so our guilt and danger will be proportionably *great* in not observing, when it is in our power, these *two* more easy institutions,|| which are not only of a higher

* For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. 1 Cor. v. 7.

† Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. John iii. 5. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Saved by the washing of regeneration. Titus iii. 5.

‡ And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant. Gen. xvii. 14.

§ But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from his people. Num. ix. 13.

|| See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. Heb. xii. 25.

authority, but also the distinguishing badges of a more excellent profession.*

By the word SACRAMENT the Church informs us *is meant an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.* In order, therefore, to constitute a sacrament there must be, *first*, something discernible and apparent to our senses: *secondly*, this external sign must represent some spiritual grace and favour vouchsafed us by God: *thirdly*, the outward symbol must be of Christ's own institution: and, *fourthly*, it must be appointed by him as a means of conveying to us the inward grace, and as a seal and pledge to assure it to us.

The parts of which a sacrament consists are two, viz. *the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.* Outward sensible things can, by the institution of God, be means to convey, and pledges to assure to us, divine grace and favour. These sacramental signs were ordained by God in gracious condescension to our infirmities, to inform our understanding, to refresh our memories, and to excite our affections. Their efficacy is not owing to any power in *themselves*, but to the *blessing of Christ.*† We are not, therefore, to doubt but that, in the right use of the *outward means*,

* For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. *John* i. 17.

† So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God, that giveth the increase. *1 Cor.* iii. 7.

he will, by the power of his Spirit, though in a manner unknown to us, convey and confirm in *Baptism*, and convey and confirm in the *Lord's Supper* to the worthy receivers, the divine grace signified thereby.

The *Lord's Supper* is so called, because the *Jewish* custom of eating bread and drinking wine, at the conclusion of the *Paschal Supper*, was by our Lord converted into the sacrament of his most precious *body* and *blood*.*

The Church teaches us, that *the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper is bread and wine, which the Lord has commanded to be received*. Though it is our duty to rest satisfied in our Lord's will and pleasure, without seeking after a reason for his appointments; we cannot but observe, that as our spiritual purification is appositely represented by *water* in the *other* sacrament, so is our spiritual sustenance by *bread* and *wine* in *this*. This sacrament is commanded to be administered in *both kinds*.†

The Church likewise informs us, that *the inward part, or thing signified, is the body and blood of Christ*. God did not only give his

* And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you. *Luke xxii. 19, 20.*

† The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? *1 Cor. x. 16.* And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. *Matth. xxvi. 26, 27.*

Son Jesus Christ to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in this holy sacrament; and if we receive it with a true penitent heart and lively faith, we do *spiritually* eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood: we partake of all those blessings which he purchased by the offering of his body and blood; we are nourished and preserved to everlasting life.

The Church assures us, that *the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ and of the benefits which we receive thereby.* This memorial of Christ's death is to be a standing service in his Church, so long as it continues militant on earth. Christ did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue *a perpetual* memory of his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.* His death is called a *sacrifice*; because our heavenly Father, of his tender mercy, gave his only Son Jesus Christ, to suffer *death* upon the cross for *our redemption*; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient *sacrifice*, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.† By this sacrifice we receive the remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven.‡

* For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

† And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John ii. 2.

‡ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the

And as the Son of God did vouchsafe to yield up his soul by *death*, upon the cross for our salvation; so it is the duty of all Christians frequently to receive the communion, in *remembrance of the sacrifice of his death*, as he himself has commanded.*

The eucharist is considered by some as not only a sacrament, in which, under the symbols of bread and wine, according to the institution of Christ, the faithful truly and spiritually receive the body and blood of Christ, but also a *sacrifice, commemorative of the original sacrifice and death of Christ* for our deliverance from sin and death: a *memorial made before God*, to plead with him the *meritorious sacrifice and death* of his dear Son for the forgiveness of our sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion. The eucharist being, as its name imports, a *sacrifice of thanksgiving*, the bread and wine, after they have been offered, or given to God, and blessed or sanctified by his Holy Spirit, are returned by the hand of his minister, to be eaten by the faithful, as a *feast upon the sacrifice*; both to denote their being at peace and in favour with God, being thus fed at his table, and eating of his food, and also to convey to the worthy receivers all the benefits and blessings of Christ's natural body and blood,

death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. *Rom. v. 10.*

* After the same manner he also took the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 1 Cor. xi. 25, 26.

which were offered and slain for their redemption.*

The Church informs us, that *the benefits whereof we are partakers in the Lord's Supper are the strengthening and refreshing of our souls, by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine. As bread and wine, considered only as natural food, strengthen and refresh our bodies, so this bread and wine, received as memorials of the body and blood of Christ our Master, tend to the improvement and health of our souls. In this ordinance our souls are strengthened by the most solemn exercise of faith; by the most lively acts of gratitude and love; and especially by the communication of supernatural grace.*† Our souls are also refreshed by the comfortable assurance of God's favour

* See Bishop Seabury's discourse on the holy eucharist.

Some diversity of opinion exists on the subject of the eucharist being, in a strict and proper sense, a sacrifice. Considering the *death* of the victim as essential to a *sacrifice*, the term is improperly applied to the eucharist. In this ordinance there is no victim slain and offered. But if *sacrifice* be considered as synonymous with *oblation*, the holy eucharist may be esteemed a *true and proper sacrifice*. For the benediction of the *bread and wine* by our Lord, we may reasonably conclude, was accompanied with the solemn *oblation* of them to his Almighty Father, as the memorial of his body that was to be broken, and his blood that was to be shed as a propitiation for the sins of the world. Accordingly our Church, following primitive usage, makes an *oblation* of the consecrated bread and wine in the holy eucharist. "We, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here, before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, *which we now offer unto thee*, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make." Either as a *sacrifice* or as an *oblation*, the end of this solemn presentation of the consecrated bread and wine to God is the same, to plead with him, that "by the merits and death of his Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood," all the faithful members of his Church may "obtain remission of their sins, and all other benefits of his passion." See the prayer of consecration in the communion office.

† He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. *John vi. 56.*

and gracious *goodness* toward us;* that we are very *members* incorporate in the mystical body of his Son,† which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and also *heirs* through hope of his everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of his dear Son.‡

We are taught by the Church, *that it is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper to examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to let a new life, have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with all men.* All persons are to *examine* into the state of their souls before they come to the Lord's Supper; because without *repentance* we are not capable of that pardon which is here offered us:§ and it is by *faith* that we discern the Lord's body in this sacrament, and receive the spiritual benefits it is designed to convey.||

The Lord's Supper is not instituted for the nourishment of the *body*, but for the refreshment of the *soul*; the soul therefore must be put in a proper *disposition* to *receive* it, and

* He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? *Rom. viii. 32.*

† For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. *Eph. v. 30.*

‡ And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. *1 John v. 11.*

§ Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. *1 Cor. v. 8.*

|| I said therefore unto you, That ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins. *John viii. 24.*

feed upon it. It is a *lively representation of the death of Christ for the sins of mankind*; and therefore the soul must possess a *just sense* of the *sufferings* of Christ and his *love* to mankind, and also an humble and lively *faith*, and *hope* in his merits. It is an *office of praise and thanksgiving* for the greatest blessings; redemption from eternal death; restoration to the favour of God, and a title to everlasting life: to celebrate it aright, therefore, we must come prepared with a *due sense* both of the *extreme misery* of our condition without a Redeemer, and also of the *blessings and benefits* to which we are entitled through Christ. It is also a *memorial of our deliverance from the power of sin*, and is the *means* by which we become *partakers of the spirit of God*: we should therefore bring with us to this ordinance not only a *willingness*, but a *desire* for deliverance from the *power of our sins*, and for the *assistance of God's holy Spirit* to subdue them, with firm resolutions to *improve his grace*. In this holy sacrament we behold the supreme claim which Christ has to our homage and obedience, since he bought us with the *price of his own blood*; and therefore we cannot partake of this ordinance aright, without a just sense of our obligations to *serve and obey* him as our Lord and Master, and without *resigning ourselves* to his will. The holy sacrament, under the most impressive and affecting emblems, sets before us the *covenant of mercy and pardon*, to which God is pleased to admit

mankind, on condition of their repentance and amendment; and hence arises the indispensable necessity of *repenting of our past sins*, and entering into *resolutions of obedience* for the future. In this holy supper we hold *communion* with our *fellow Christians*, as *brethren*, and *members of the same body* under Christ our head; and hence it follows, that *love* and *unity* must be necessary qualifications for a right participation of this sacred ordinance.

There are some persons who are deterred from this holy supper by the apprehension of the peril of *unworthy receiving*.^{*} The danger indeed is great to those who will presume to eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, *rashly* and *unadvisedly*. But their guilt is not less, nor their situation less hazardous, who persist in disobedience to the last and dying command of their dearest Saviour, and reject his invitation to partake of so many *great and spiritual* blessings, upon pretence of that danger, which it is in their own power to avoid.

* The *peril* of receiving the Lord's Supper *unworthily* is heightened, in the apprehensions of some persons, by the declaration of St. Paul, (1 Cor. xi. 29.) *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.* But it is to be observed, that the word *damnation* does not signify *eternal condemnation*, but (as it is translated in the margin of the Bible) *temporal judgment*. And the *unworthy receiving*, for which the Corinthians were afflicted with *temporal judgments*, such as *sickness and death*, (ver. 30.) consisted in their making no distinction between the *Lord's Supper* and a *common meal*. They did not *discern the Lord's body*, (ver. 29.) They *abused and profaned* this solemn institution by *gluttony and drunkenness*, (ver. 21, 22.) and by *contentious and factious* behaviour, (ver. 18.) Christians, in the present day, therefore, unless they, in the *same way* with the Corinthians, *contemn and profane* the Lord's Supper, cannot be guilty of that *unworthy receiving* mentioned by St. Paul, for which the Corinthians sustained not *eternal condemnation*, but *temporal judgment*.

Our safety, therefore, consists in resolving to do the duty required, and to take the best care so to prepare ourselves, that the performance may be accepted by God.*

The first duty required of those who come to the Lord's Supper, is to *repent them truly of their former sins*. We should examine our lives and conversations by the rule of God's commandments;† and *whereinsoever* we shall perceive ourselves to have offended, either by will, word, or deed, there we must bewail our own sinfulness,‡ and confess our guilt to Almighty God.§

Having examined our lives and confessed our transgressions, and humbled ourselves under the sense of our *natural* depravity and *actual* guilt, we should then turn our thoughts upon the only *means* by which we can be redeemed from our sin and reconciled to God. The means of our deliverance from sin, and restoration to the divine favour, are provided in the plan of salvation through *Jesus Christ*. *In him we have redemption, even the forgiveness of our sins*, (Col. i. 14.) Him hath God set forth *to be the propitiation for our sins*, (Rom. iii. 25.) He is the *Mediator be-*

* But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. 1 Cor. xi. 28.

† Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. *Lum.* iii. 40.

‡ Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10.

§ For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. *Psal. li. 3.*

tween God and man. He gave himself a ransom for all, (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.) He is our Advocate with the Father, (1 John ii. 1.) By his death we are reconciled to God, (Rom. v. 10.) He has made our peace with the Father through the blood of his cross, (Col. i. 20.)

It is a comfort to us, under the burden of our sins, to consider, not only that we have a *Saviour and Redeemer*, but that he has given *humble and penitent sinners* the most *gracious invitations and encouragements* to come to him for *pardon and salvation*. *Come unto me*, says the blessed Jesus, (Mat. xi. 28.) *all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out, (John vi. 37.) And he tenderly declares, (Luke v. 32.) that he came into the world on purpose to call sinners to repentance; and to seek and to save that which was lost, (Luke xix. 10.)*

The consideration of these gracious declarations, and of our own *vileness and misery*, will prepare us to come to Christ with a *true and lively faith*; neither trusting to our own merits, nor distrusting the mercies of God, but *casting ourselves wholly upon the merits of Jesus Christ*; in a steadfast reliance that through his blood we shall receive the remission of our sins and *shall have peace with God*.

But then we must remember that the redemption of Christ consists in his delivering us not only from the guilt of our past transgressions, but also from the *power and domi-*

nion of sin. Christ gave himself for us, not only that he might redeem us from all iniquity, but likewise that he might purify us unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, (Heb. ix. 14.) He was manifested, not only to take away our sins, but also by his blood to purge our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God, (Titus ii. 14.) No persons then must hope for any benefit from the death of Christ, but they who will take the redemption which he wrought, whole and entire; and receive him as a Saviour, not only from the guilt but from the dominion of sin. No one must hope for the pardon of his sins, but he who sincerely desires to be delivered from their dominion.

And therefore having begun the work of repentance, in the confession of our transgressions and the humiliation of our souls, we must continue and perfect it, by solemnly professing, in the presence of God, our earnest desires to be delivered from the power of sin, and our resolutions, through the assistance of his grace, to forsake ungodliness and worldly lusts, (Titus ii. 11, 12.) and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, while he shall please to continue us in this world.

When, upon examination, we can humbly trust that we truly and earnestly repent of our sins, and are in love and charity with our neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking in his holy ways, we must then draw

near without fear,* and take the holy sacrament to our comfort; in firm faith that Almighty God, for the sake of our blessed Redeemer, and the merits of his death, will mercifully pardon us, and graciously receive us as worthy communicants.

We should behave with all possible reverence and devotion, when we present ourselves amongst our brethren who come to feed on the banquet of that most heavenly food. With hearts impressed with penitence, with faith, with reverence and love, we should, at the altar, give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for all the blessings vouchsafed unto us, but especially for the redemption of the world, by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man.

* For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 2 *Tim.* i. 7.

THE
WEEK'S PREPARATION.

MONDAY MORNING.

MEDITATION.

The Obligation of receiving the Holy Communion stated ; and the various Pretences for neglecting it, considered and refuted.

THE holy eucharist is the highest act of Christian worship. It is the *memorial* of the passion and death of our blessed Redeemer, made before the Almighty Father, to render him propitious to us, by pleading with him the meritorious sufferings of his beloved Son. It is a sensible *pledge* of God's love to us. He hath given his Son to die for us. He hath also given the precious body and blood of Christ, to be our spiritual food and sustenance. The bread of this world, frequently taken, is necessary to keep the body in health and vigour. This *bread of God*, frequently received, is necessary to preserve the soul in *spiritual health* ; and to keep the *divine life* of faith and holiness from becoming extinct.

An ordinance of so sublime a nature, fruitful of such inestimable blessings, and enjoined on us by that blessed Redeemer who laid

down his life for us, one would suppose would be highly valued, and gratefully received, by all who profess themselves Christians. It is, however, a lamentable truth, that the greater proportion of them live in the habitual neglect of this distinguishing badge of their holy profession, the ordinance which unites them to their Redeemer, and which is the invaluable seal and pledge of his mercy and grace.

Thou art urged, O my soul, to receive the holy communion by the obligations of *duty*, of *gratitude*, and of *interest*.

Duty urges thee; Christ, the Lord and Saviour, has *commanded* thee to receive the communion, in remembrance of his death and passion. "Do this," says he, "in remembrance of me," (Luke xxii. 19.) Are we not bound to revere and cherish, with the most sacred fervour, the command of a *dying friend*? And shall we be insensible to the pressing injunction of our Lord and Master, who, at the moment when he was about to lay down his life for us, even for us who were his *enemies*, commanded us to *commemorate* his infinite love?

The powerful claims of *gratitude* urge obedience to his command. Transcendent were the love and compassion which he displayed for us. "The Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory, humbled himself even to the death upon the cross for us, miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death." He instituted and ordained holy

mysteries, as pledges of his infinite love, and for a continual remembrance of his death and passion. And shall we not gratefully commemorate his love towards us, *in the way* that he hath appointed? Shall we refuse to render him even the tribute of *thanks* for the inconceivable sufferings which he endured for us, and for the inestimable blessings which he purchased for us? By neglecting the instituted memorial of his love and mercy, O my soul, thou dost say to thy blessed Redeemer, I cherish no sensibility for thy sufferings; I care not, though the displays of thine infinite love be forgotten; I set no value on the infinite condescensions of thy mercy. Pause and reflect, O my soul, if thou dost neglect this sacred ordinance, how great is the guilt of *ingratitude* which thou wilt incur.

But if *duty* does not impel, if *gratitude* cannot excite thee, listen, at least, to the calls of *interest*. Consider how many inestimable benefits are annexed to this ordinance. *The pardon of sin; the assistance and consolations of God's Holy Spirit; and an earnest and pledge of a glorious resurrection to eternal life*, are the benefits assured to us by a worthy participation of the body and blood of Christ. When, therefore, we absent ourselves from the holy sacrament, we wilfully deprive ourselves of the greatest blessings. Shall not, then, the powerful considerations of *interest* urge us worthily to partake of an ordinance which rescues us from the guilt of sin, from the curse of God,

from everlasting wo? Shall we *deliberately condemn* the favour of God, the consolations and powerful operations of his Spirit, and the immortal felicities of his heavenly kingdom? Not less is the *folly* than the guilt of neglecting this inestimable pledge of divine mercy, of grace, of immortal life and glory.

Wilt thou urge, O my soul, the *cares of the world* as an excuse for not coming to the holy communion? What! art thou so engaged with worldly business, that thou canst not find time to approach this heavenly institution? Ah! remember, they who were bidden to the supper in the gospel, (Luke xiv. 16.) excused themselves from coming, on the pretence of their worldly occupations; and they were pronounced unworthy of the heavenly feast, because they thus preferred their temporal business to their eternal welfare. No man is rendered unfit for receiving the holy sacrament, who pursues the occupations of life with moderation and honesty, with a due regard to the laws of God, and his good providence over us. Whoever pursues them otherwise, disqualifies himself for *heaven*. The hearts of men are apt to dwell too much upon the things of this world, and to be engrossed with its cares and concerns. God has, therefore, mercifully provided the ordinances of the gospel, to raise our souls from the earth, and to replenish them with heavenly thoughts and desires. It is necessary, therefore, that *all Christians* should attend on the ordinan-

ces of religion, in order that such devout emotions, such a desire for heavenly enjoyments, may be excited in their minds, as shall prevent them from being buried in the cares and pursuits of this life.

Art thou deterred from the holy communion, O my soul, by a sense of thy unworthiness? But this sense of thy unworthiness, when it produces a resolution to forsake thy sins, is the first qualification of a devout communicant; for it is the first step towards reconciliation with God. Jesus Christ particularly invites those who are weary and heavy laden with the burden of their sins, and earnestly desire to be delivered from them, to come unto him and receive rest. And to these humble penitents does he dispense, in his holy supper, pardon, comfort, and spiritual strength.

Art thou afraid, O my soul, to come to the holy table, because in the daily business of the world thou art surrounded with temptations which may lead thee to break thy solemn resolutions? The lawful business of life never exposes men to temptations, which they cannot, through the assistance of God's grace, overcome by care and watchfulness. A view of the temptations to which thou art exposed should lead thee to the table of the Lord, for new supplies of spiritual strength to resist them.

Art thou deterred from this holy sacrament, O my soul, by the apprehension that sin com-

mitted after receiving it, will never be forgiven? Do not thus impiously distrust the mercy of God. Through the frailty of thy nature, and the manifold temptations which encompass thee, thou dost frequently transgress, and fall short of thy duty. Thou hast, therefore, the greater need of that mercy, and those succours of grace, which are conveyed in the holy eucharist to the humble and penitent. Be watchful over thy ways; pray for the grace of God to enable thee to perform thy vows of obedience to him; strive to get the mastery over thy sinful passions; and then come with humble confidence to that holy supper which seals to thee the gracious assurance that thou hast *an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and that he is the propitiation for thy sins.* Frequent commemoration of the love of thy Redeemer in the holy communion will tend to cherish all thy pious graces, and especially that lively faith in his mercy which will produce peace of conscience, and joy in the favour of thy God.

Do not delay thy reception of the Lord's Supper in the presumptuous expectation of being able to receive it on the bed of death. Alas! how canst thou prepare for this holy ordinance amidst the pains and agonies of a dying bed? How canst thou be certain, that death will not suddenly arrest thee? Do not flatter thyself with the uncertain hope of *length of days*, or of such warning of death

as will enable thee to prepare for its summons. Enter in earnest, and without delay, on the business of salvation. Inform thyself in the nature of the holy communion. Make suitable preparation for receiving it. Partake *frequently* of this heavenly banquet, during the period of health. Thus accustomed to the duties and exercises of the Christian life, thou wilt be fitted to receive the holy eucharist during sickness, or on a dying bed, as thy support at this trying hour, as the seal of God's pardon, as the pledge of thy triumphant passage through the grave and gate of death to immortal blessedness and glory.

Vain are all the pretences which would keep thee from the table of the Lord. By neglect of this holy institution, thou wilt forfeit inestimable blessings, thou wilt incur the heaviest guilt. To work out thy salvation, is the one thing needful; to secure immortal blessedness, an object of supreme importance. In tender compassion, the Redeemer hath provided, in his holy supper, the means of thy reconciliation to thy offended God, and of thy restoration to holiness and glory. Impressed with his infinite goodness, and earnestly desirous to be partaker of his salvation, resolve to commemorate his love in his holy supper; and receiving in penitence and faith the symbols of his body and blood, become partaker of his mercy, his grace, his everlasting glory.

THE PRAYER.

Suited particularly to the State of a Person who, having lived in forgetfulness of God, and in the neglect of his Christian Obligations, is awakened to a sense of his Guilt and Danger, and is desirous to seal his Pardon and Reconciliation with God, in the Holy Sacrament.

O LORD GOD, to whom I am bound by the most powerful and endearing ties! For thou art the author and preserver of my being, the source of all my mercies, my everlasting Redeemer and Judge: Thou hast lighted up in my soul those immortal powers, by which I am rendered capable of the fruition of thee, the fountain of perfection and bliss. Thy gracious Providence has conducted me through the dangers and trials of life;—thy rich bounty has supplied all my wants, and crowned my lot with mercy and loving-kindness;—thy unmerited grace has offered to me the blessings of everlasting life and redemption. O my God! I acknowledge, that the sincere and ardent service of my past life, would have been a feeble return to thee, for thine infinite love. With shame I confess, that even this inadequate tribute has been withheld from thee. With shame I confess, that though the solemn engagements of Baptism were imposed upon me, and its quickening grace conferred; though the fountain of thy mercy has been opened to me, in the sacrament of the body and blood of thy Son; though the sacred obligations and exalted rewards of thy service have been continually displayed to me, in the ministrations of the sanctuary; though thy Providence has called, thy Holy Spirit warned me, I have yet continued insensible to the claims of thy love, to my own highest duty and happiness. O Lord, I have violated the most solemn obligations. I have been insensible to the most exalted *privileges*. I have resisted the solicitations of thy

grace, though urged by the precious blood of thy beloved Son, which was poured forth a sacrifice for my sins. For ever blessed be thy long-suffering mercy, O my God! that thou hast not given me up to the *fruit of my own ways*, that thou hast not inflicted upon me the punishment due to my ingratitude and guilt. Blessed be that grace, Almighty God, which has awakened me to an apprehension of my guilt and danger, to a sense of thine infinite claims to my homage and obedience. O do thou strengthen my desires of returning unto thee; my humble but earnest resolutions of choosing thee, as my satisfying portion. And for as much as thou hast opened to the humble and penitent, in the holy sacrament of the altar, the renovating fountain of grace and mercy, let me not neglect this endearing pledge of my Saviour's love. Prepare my heart, by the powerful influence of thy grace, for worthily receiving the crucified body and blood of my blessed Lord. Awaken my contrition, quicken my faith, enliven my love, confirm my resolutions of obedience; that going to the altar, relying on my Redeemer's merits and his righteousness, I may obtain reconciliation with thee, my God—may receive supplies of that quickening grace, which will conduct me through the sorrows and temptations of this mortal pilgrimage, to the blissful fruition, in the heavenly Zion, of the everlasting glories of the Godhead; to whom, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my almighty Creator, my merciful Redeemer, my eternal Sanctifier, be ascribed all power and might, majesty and dominion, henceforth and for ever. *Amen.*

MONDAY EVENING.

MEDITATION.

The Christian directed in the serious Examination of his Spiritual Character and State, as preparatory to his receiving the Holy Communion.

Wise is the choice thou hast made, O my soul, to serve thy God ; wise thy resolution to commemorate, in the holy eucharist, the infinite love of thy Saviour, who, by his death, purchased thy redemption, and offers thee, in that holy ordinance, all the inestimable blessings of his passion.

But recollect, O my soul, that if thou dost advance, impenitent, to the supper of thy Lord, he will not accept thee as his guest ; thou wilt not be nourished with that spiritual food which diffuses its life-giving power only through the heart of the penitent believer. The Saviour withholds the blessings of his grace from those who, unaffected with the condescensions of his mercy, and insensible to their own weakness and demerit, approach his altar with impenitent and unmortified hearts.

Unless, therefore, I come to the altar cherishing a lively sense of the weakness and sinfulness of my heart, by which I have been led to transgress the holy laws of my God ; deeply sensible that the only pledge of my forgiveness is the meritorious atonement of my Saviour ; and steadfastly resolving that, by the aids of

his grace, I will renounce all my sins, and faithfully serve him: unless I come to the altar in this character of an humble penitent, I must not hope to partake of the blessings of salvation; or to experience those divine joys, those strengthening succours, which refresh the souls of those who, by a true and lively faith, spiritually feed on the body and blood of their crucified Redeemer.

To prepare then for partaking of this holy ordinance, and to secure the inestimable blessings which are dispensed in it to penitent believers, I must impartially search my heart, and faithfully examine the course of my life, in order to ascertain my spiritual character and state.

Dispose me earnestly and seriously to enter on this examination, Almighty God; impress on me the infinite importance of determining the state of my soul—whether I am at peace with thee, through penitence and faith in the blood of thy Son; or am obnoxious, through unrepented sin, to thy just displeasure. Enable me, with faithfulness, to search my heart, knowing that my eternal destiny depends on the issue. Thy powerful grace only can detect the errors of my life, and strip from my heart the veil of self-love which conceals its vices. Do thou, therefore, O God, *try me, and seek the ground of mine heart; prove me, and examine my thoughts, and see if there be any evil way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

As in thy presence, and exposed to thy in-

spec^{tion}, O thou God, who searchest the heart, who canst not be deceived, and who wilt not be mocked,—as before thy tribunal, O thou Sovereign Judge of men, who wilt bring to light every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, do I now seriously enter on the examination of the condition of my soul. Impress on my heart, O God, by thy Holy Spirit, the solemn inquiries which I now make. May I faithfully answer them to my own conscience, as I shall certainly have to answer them at thy tribunal, to thee, my Almighty Judge.

Am I a member of the Church of Christ, which he purchased with his blood, which he sanctifies with his Spirit, and which, according to his sovereign pleasure, is made the channel of his *covenanted* mercies to a fallen world?

Have I been admitted to the participation of the inestimable privileges of this Church, to a title to the forgiveness of sin, to the favour of God, to the aids of the Holy Spirit, to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven; by that ordinance, which Jesus Christ, its divine head, instituted, the holy sacrament of Baptism?

Do I keep up my communion with this Church, by devout submission to the ministrations of its *priesthood* in the orders of *Bishops*, *Priests*, and *Deacons*, deriving their

authority by regular transmission from Jesus Christ, the Redeemer and Head of the Church, who has promised to be with the ministers of apostolic succession "always, even to the end of the world?"

Have I been diligent in imploring, by earnest prayer, the aids of the Holy Spirit, to enable me to fulfil my baptismal vows, "to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him?"

Have I ratified, in the holy rite of Confirmation, the vows and promises of Baptism, receiving, by the ministry of Christ's authorized servant, the manifold and strengthening aids of the Holy Ghost?

Have all my violations of these solemn engagements, all my infirmities and sins, been cleansed by repentance, and by renewed faith in the blood of Christ?

Have I frequently contemplated, with deep humiliation, the state of depravity and guilt in which man is sunk, while destitute of an interest in the merits of a Saviour?

Have I reviewed, with lively compunction, the transgressions which have defiled my conscience?

In the bitterness of my spirit, have I acknowledged the justice of God in my condemnation? Have I humbly and fervently adored the fulness of his grace and mercy in providing for me the means of redemption through Jesus Christ?

Awakened to a lively sense of my sins,

have I fled, with earnest supplication, to the throne of my Almighty Judge, and reverently presented there, as the only plea of my forgiveness, the meritorious blood of my Redeemer?

Has faith opened to me the fulness and sufficiency of my Saviour's merits, and conveyed to my troubled conscience rest and peace?

Have I experienced the power of divine grace, in awakening my sensibility to the evil and guilt of sin, to the excellence and rewards of holiness, and in exciting the resolution to renounce all the dictates of my corrupt nature, and to devote myself to my God and Saviour, in the services of a holy life?

Am I sincerely desirous, and always ready, to partake of the holy eucharist, thereby to commemorate the dying love of my Redeemer; to testify my communion with his Church and people; to plead before God, for the pardon of my sins, the all-prevailing merits of his cross and passion; and to refresh and strengthen my soul with his most precious body and blood?

Am I diligent and faithful in all the exercises and duties of the Christian life?

Am I uniform and sincere in the duties of private meditation and prayer, in all those pious exercises which have a tendency to strengthen the reign of grace in my heart?

Are the services of God's sanctuary the source of my most exalted pleasures?

Do I with constant and holy desire wait in his sacred courts, that I may taste his goodness, and experience his satisfying joys?

Sensible of my own weakness, and of the dominion of sin in my heart, do I earnestly implore the grace of God, and constantly rely on the powerful agency of the Holy Spirit, to sanctify my soul, to guide, quicken, and preserve me in my Christian course?

In reliance on the aids of this Holy Spirit, do I daily endeavour to weaken and subdue my sinful passions, to strengthen and exalt the holy graces of my soul?

Does my humility become more deep, my love to God more fervent, my zeal and delight in his service more exalted, my faith in my Saviour more uniform and supreme?

Does my soul glow with gratitude to God, my Almighty Maker and Benefactor, Father and Friend, for the manifold mercies of life; and, above all, for the *unspeakable* gift of his Son Jesus Christ, for the inestimable blessings of redeeming love?

In every event of life, do I humbly confide in his wisdom, power, and goodness, and commit myself to his guidance and disposal?

In *prosperity* am I humble and thankful, mindful that every advantage of honour or fortune, every talent that distinguishes me above others, is the unmerited gift of God,

which I am to employ for his glory and the good of my fellow men?

When *adversity* assails me, do I still preserve my confidence in God,—still bless the Lord “who giveth,” and humbly bow to the dispensations of that infinitely wise and merciful God, “who taketh away?”

Ever keeping in view the holy pattern of my Saviour’s life, which I am bound to imitate, do I constantly endeavour to obey his gracious commands; to become, like him, meek and gentle, kind and compassionate, patient and long-suffering?

Animated by that spirit of love which urged the Saviour to pour out his soul a sacrifice for the sins of men, do I earnestly endeavour to “do good unto all men;” to sooth the bosom rent with affliction; to restore to health and gladness the subjects of disease and poverty?

Sensible of the inestimable value of the blessings of redemption, and of the infinite importance of the souls of men, do I humbly endeavour, by every proper and prudent mean, to promote the salvation of mankind?

Under an habitual sense of my obligations to God, of the account I must render to him who is the present witness, and who will be the final judge of my conduct, do I earnestly endeavour faithfully to discharge all the *relative* and *social* duties of life, of husband and wife, of parent and child, of brother and sister, of master and servant, of magistrate and *subject*, of neighbour and friend?

Ever mindful that my "body is the temple of the Holy Spirit," and that "into the kingdom of heaven entereth nothing that is unholy and unclean," do I endeavour, by abstinence, by prayer, by resolution and watchfulness, to mortify my sinful passions; and do I sedulously avoid every temptation which might lead me to violate the laws of temperance, soberness, and chastity?

Considering the present life as a state of pilgrimage, the days of which are few, uncertain, and evil, am I careful not to fix my affections immoderately upon it; not to be too highly elated with its pleasures, which may soon pass away; not to be too much depressed by its sorrows, which may soon terminate?

Does my heavenly inheritance, the eternal kingdom of God, with whom there is fulness of joy, at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore, engage my devout contemplations?

Does the habitual prospect of the eternal glories which my Saviour hath prepared for me in his heavenly kingdom, animate me in the discharge of duty; elevate my spirit when under the pressure of grief; console me under the loss of friends and relatives; and raise me at all times above the sorrows and trials, the scorn and persecution of the world?

Is this my situation? this my spiritual character and state? these the dispositions of my soul?

That I have been called, from the darkness of error and sin, into the light of the gospel of salvation; and restored from the bondage of Satan, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That I have been admitted by baptism, into that holy church where thy mercy is my solace, thy favour my portion, thy grace my guide and safeguard, the hope of heaven my exalted privilege,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That, in condescension to the weakness of my nature, thou hast instituted sensible *memorials* of thy love, and *pledges* of thy grace and mercy; that in the humble participation of the ordinances of thy church I can derive light, comfort, and salvation,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

¶ The following paragraph, between brackets, is to be used, when a person who has lived in transgression of the laws of God, and neglect of his Christian obligations, is awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger, and is desirous to make his peace with his offended God. And then the succeeding paragraphs, to the words "To thee, ever-blessed Jehovah," &c. are to be omitted.

[That, though I have lived wholly regardless of the inestimable privileges of my Christian vocation; though by my habitual transgressions I have defied thy power, abused thy justice, and contemned thy mercy; though the strivings of thy Spirit have been exerted in vain, and the precious blood of thy Son

been in vain interposed to arrest my rebellious career;—that though my sins have been thus multiplied, my guilt thus aggravated, thou hast yet, O God of infinite mercies, displayed towards me the riches of thy forbearance; that thine arms are yet open to receive the returning prodigal who left his father's house to riot in the pleasures of a corrupting world; that thou dost even prepare for me, to be the pledge and seal of my forgiveness, the banquet of the body and blood of that Redeemer whom I have contemned; and art ready to apply to my guilty soul my Saviour's merits; that thou hast awakened me to a sense of my guilt and danger, and inspired me with an earnest desire to enjoy the light of thy countenance,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

[O Lord, arise and save me, and let not iniquity prove my ruin.]

That thou hast quickened me when I was careless and forgetful of thee; and instead of giving me up to hardness of heart, to the merited punishment of my sins, hast graciously awakened and restored me; that when sunk under the "grievous remembrance" of my sins, and bowed down under their "intolerable burden," thou didst enlighten my soul to discern the riches of mercy and grace in Christ Jesus, and enable me joyfully to rest in him as *wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption*,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That I have been excited to choose thee, O God, as my portion; that my soul has been in any degree inflamed with love and gratitude to thee, with trust in thy power and goodness; that the graces of humility, meekness, purity, and love have in any degree established their reign in my heart; that I have been enabled to adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour, by a virtuous life, and to imitate the blessed example of the holy Jesus, by doing good unto my fellow men,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That when, from the infirmities of my nature, or the predominance of my sinful passions, I am led to forget thee, my God, to violate my vows of duty, and to put my Saviour to an open shame by my sins,—thou dost not “cast me off for ever,” but art still willing to be “entreated,” and to restore to me “the joy of thy free Spirit,”—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That thou art graciously pleased to promise to reward my imperfect services, with the eternal fruition of the glories of thy presence; that amidst the cares, the occupations, and the ensnaring pleasures of the world, I have been enabled to set my affections on the felicities of that heavenly kingdom, for which, through thy mercy, I am destined,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

That thou hast provided, for the sustenance and refreshment of my frail nature, while I sojourn in this vale of infirmity and sin, celes-

tial food, even the body and blood of thy crucified Son, spiritually conveyed under the emblems of bread and wine; and that thou dost *now* invite me to the glorious banquet of the Lamb that was slain to redeem me by his blood,—

Blessed be thy name, O God.

O, while I extol the wonders of thy mercy, and gratefully celebrate the triumphs of thy grace—may I be excited to aim at the highest degrees of holiness and virtue, as becometh the redeemed of the Lord.

Evermore, O Lord, refresh me by thy mercy.

Evermore guide me by thy grace.

To thee, ever-blessed Jehovah, be ascribed all the glory and praise of my redemption.

For thou, *O Almighty Father*, didst give for me *thine only-begotten Son*; thou, *O eternal Son*, wast for me *obedient to the death of the cross*; thou, *O Holy Ghost*, dost apply to my soul the mercies of redemption.

Glory be to the *Father*, the fountain of mercy. Glory be to the *Son*, ~~the~~ Redeemer of mankind. Glory be to the *Holy Ghost*, the guide, the comforter, and sanctifier of the faithful.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto our God, for ever and ever.

Alas, O God, the songs of *praise* must be exchanged for the sighs of *contrition*.

For to thee, O Lord, belongeth righteousness; but unto me confusion of face—for I have violated thy law.

When I have done all, I am bound to confess that I am but an unprofitable servant; and must expect the rewards of heaven as the free gift of unmerited mercy.

How much more then am I bound earnestly to deprecate the inflictions of thy justice, when the course of my life has been marked by many *wilful transgressions* of thy laws!

I will confess mine iniquity.

I will be sorry for my sins.

A CONFESSION OF SIN.

(From the Liturgy of the Church.)

ALMIGHTY GOD, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of men; I acknowledge and bewail my manifold sins and wickedness, which I from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against me. I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto me; the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake forgive me all that is past. To thee only it appertaineth

to forgive sins : spare me, therefore, good Lord, spare me. My conscience by sin is accused—O may I be absolved by the merciful pardon. Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me ! Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant me thy peace ! O God, whose nature and property it is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive my humble petitions ! and though I am tied and fast bound by the chain of my sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose me, through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

THE SUPPLICATION.

BLESSED LORD ! who art ever merciful and gracious, not willing the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live ; and who hast given thine only Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life ; with the deepest reverence I adore thine infinite love. What is man, O Lord, that thou shouldst be thus mindful of him ? or the son of man, that thou shouldst thus mercifully visit him ? O God, I confess and lament that I have been insensible to the claims of thy love, and, by my aggravated sins, have forfeited all title to thy mercy. Blessed be thy name, that thou hast laid on Jesus Christ the iniquities of mankind. Blessed be thy name, that in him there is mercy and plenteous redemption. O make me deeply sensible of my need of the merits and grace of my Redeemer. Penetrate me with a conviction of my weakness and depravity, of my guilt and unworthiness, that I may be excited to flee for refuge from

the wrath to come, to the hope set before me in the Gospel. Blessed Jesus ! cleanse me by thy precious blood, and sanctify my corrupt nature by thy grace. Discerning thy all-sufficiency to save and to redeem, may my trust be reposed on thee alone. O merciful God ! inspire in my heart a supreme concern for the things that belong to my eternal peace. May the salvation of my soul engross my most earnest attention. Impress on me the folly and the guilt of sacrificing my immortal interests to the perishing pleasures of the world. O do thou quicken in my heart, Almighty God, the apprehension of my guilt and danger while in rebellion against thee. Strengthen the desires which thy grace has awakened, for that satisfying peace which thou dost confer on the humble suppliants for thy mercy. And since thou hast instituted ordinances to be the channels of conveying thy grace to the soul, may I reverently submit to thy appointments, and gratefully seek thy favour, in the way which thou hast appointed. To that holy sacrament, where Jesus the Saviour dispenses everlasting salvation, may I bring a heart humbled by thy grace, affections supremely desirous of the joys of thy love ; that thus I may be restored to the reconciled countenance of thee, my God, through Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

TUESDAY MORNING.

MEDITATION.

Man in his Natural State.

THE examination of thy character and state, O my soul, should have occupied thy deep attention. The inquiry was calculated to display, in the most engaging colours, the infinite love of God in all his dispensations towards thee as thy Creator, thy Preserver, thy everlasting Redeemer. Insensible hast thou been, if the lively emotions of gratitude have not been enkindled by the review. Insensible hast thou been, if the infinite mercies which thou hast reviewed, exciting every tender affection, have not been celebrated in the ascription of praise to the greatest and best of beings, thy Father, Redeemer, and God.

Thou hast been exposed to the holy inspection of that God, who brings to light the most secret actions. The inquiry in which thou hast been engaged, involves thy present peace, thy everlasting welfare. If, then, the examination has been conducted with that solicitude and impartiality which these awful considerations are calculated to excite, thou hast found, O my soul, that thou art *guilty*, *deeply* guilty, in the sight of thy holy Judge.

The searching beams of the Spirit of God have disclosed the depths of thy depravity and guilt. The view of the infection of sin, which diffuses itself through thy powers and affections, must have laid prostrate thy claims to that purity which rendered thee the delight of thy Maker, when at the first his voice arrayed thee with the glories of his image. Alas! "How has the gold become dim! how has the fine gold become changed! the crown has fallen from my head. Wo unto me, for I have sinned!"

An *understanding* once enlivened by the beams of divine light, no longer intuitively discerns the glory of God, and attains a full knowledge of his laws. Its powers, enfeebled and depraved, are the sport of prejudice and passion, which pervert its researches. A *will*, which once followed the enlightened dictates of the understanding, and centered all its pursuits in God, as the supreme object of its choice, now obeys the dictates of ignoble passions. With fearless presumption, it impiously turns, in rebellion against God, the very energies which it holds dependent on his power. It wilfully chooses those debasing pleasures, which are directly opposed to that divine law in which it once placed its perfection and delight. *Affections*, which glowed with love to God, in the fruition of whose favour they were rewarded with perfect bliss, are now bound in the chains of sensual appetite. Depraved and corrupt, they now eagerly pursue the

perishing enjoyments of sense, and condemn the communion which it was once their glory to maintain with the source of purity and love. Now, disdaining the bliss which flows from the light of God's countenance, they seek the gratification of those grovelling propensities which ally the aspiring nature of man to the brutes that perish. O my soul! when I contrast the exalted powers which, in thy primeval state, conformed thee to the image of thy Creator, and admitted thee to the enjoyment of his love, with the corrupting passions by which thou art now enslaved; can I wonder, that, till restored by his grace to the glorious image which thou hast forfeited, thou dost labour under the weight of his displeasure, under his awful curse?

Abasing to thy pride, painful to thy self-love, O my soul, but certain as the oracles of truth in which it is revealed, and as that divine plan of salvation of which it is the basis, is the truth, that human nature is *degenerate* and *corrupt*. When the holy Job, borne down by the blaze of divine glory which displayed the corruption of his nature, vents his contrition in the exclamation, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes;" when the holy king of Israel, awakened to remorse at the view of crimes of the deepest dye, which, through the rage of fell lust, he had committed, follows back his guilt to its source, a degenerate nature,—declaring in penitential confession, that he was "conceived in sin, and brought forth.

in iniquity;" when an inspired apostle, tracing the assemblage of vices which had brutalized mankind, pronounces the alarming declaration, that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,"—thou dost hear a truth, proclaimed, as it were, by the *sacred lips of God himself*, which the *view of the world*, which the *history of man*, which the *testimony of conscience* irresistibly confirm.

Sayest thou, man is not a fallen being? Trace then his perfection in the world which he inhabits. Is it decked with those glories which render it a habitation worthy of the illustrious being for whose enjoyment it was created? Is the strain of harmony and peace poured forth from this august temple, where man, pure and perfect, enjoys the smiles of his Maker's love? Ah! scourged by war, pestilence, and famine, the earth sends forth the sighs and groans of a wretched race; loaded with the guilt of human crimes, it trembles under the frown of the Almighty; blasted often by the lightning of heaven, it waits the dread fiat, which will overwhelm it in destruction, for the *sin of man*.

Sayest thou, man is a perfect being? Display then his virtues in the records of his *history*. Alas! these records are dyed in blood. They exhibit the portrait of human guilt in glaring colours. Do the fair forms of justice, benevolence, and mercy rise to view, and, extending their benignant reign over the human race, pronounce that man is

blest and happy? Does one soul of celestial love pervade the family of mankind, united by the most endearing ties, by common wants, by common feelings, by an exalted and eternal destiny? Ah! oppression lays her sceptre on her sullen victims; ambition erects the trophies of triumph amidst the ruins into which her merciless spirit has swept the proudest boasts of human grandeur; the spectre of revenge, brandishing the steel streaming with gore, urges man to seal the purpose of vengeance in his brother's blood.

Alas! the *world*, groaning under the curse of God, and waiting the final execution of the sentence of his wrath; the *history* of human nature, presenting the dreadful picture of crimes and misery, illumined only by some scattered rays of virtue and happiness, proclaim the *degeneracy*, the *corruption*, the *guilt* of man.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY GOD! who, at the first, didst create man in thine own image, and impress on his soul the seal of immortality, if by transgression he has forfeited his primeval glories, and sunk his nature in sin and misery, on his own wilful folly, and not on thy decree, most holy God, be the shame and guilt. I acknowledge that I perceive the fatal proofs of my degeneracy in my clouded understanding, in my perverse will, in my corrupt affections. I acknowledge that every view which I take of the

world around me, and of the conduct of my fellow men, confirms the humiliating truth. Almighty God! let me not deceive myself in the estimate which I form of my spiritual character and state. Let me not flatter the vain-glorious emotions of my heart, by false ideas of my purity and perfection. Let me not seek to cast a veil over the enormity of my sins, and thereby weaken the emotions of penitence, the conviction of my need of the atoning merits and purifying grace of my Redeemer. Almighty God! search through all the folds of my heart; detect my secret vices; bring to light my errors and transgressions; expose to my awakened conscience all the aggravations of my guilt; that thus humbled, convicted, and alarmed, I may see no way of escape from thy displeasure, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

TUESDAY EVENING.

MEDITATION.

Man in his Natural State.

The subject of the morning meditation continued.

BOASTEST thou, that *thou* art exempt from the stains of guilt which pollute the rest of thy race? Bring thy powerful pleas to the tribunal of *conscience*. Estimating highly the opinion of the world, perhaps thou hast *always* sought to regulate thy conduct by the

laws of honour. Calculating from motives of worldly prudence, thou hast been, in all thy dealings, honest and just. Desirous of the applause of men, or, from the impulse of a blind sympathy, thou hast been generous and charitable. Are these then thy pleas for exemption from the general sentence of guilt?

Carry thy claims to integrity and virtue higher. Allow that thou hast been honourable, that thou hast been just, that thou hast been generous and liberal, from the best motives. Allow that no gross crimes have marked thy conduct; that thy life, on the contrary, merits the reputation of being exemplary and upright. Allow that thou hast not obtained the homage due to virtue, by imposing on the world a correct and honourable exterior, while thy principles have been base and sordid. Allow that, when urged by interest and restrained by no fear of detection, thou hast not secretly practised the arts of injustice and dishonesty, which thou dost affect openly to abhor. Allow that, while just and true in thy intercourse with others, thou hast not been regardless of the duties to thyself. Allow that thou hast faithfully cherished the virtues of temperance, soberness, and chastity; and hast never indulged in the secret commission of vices which dishonoured thy nature.

Carry still higher thy pretensions in the scale of virtue. Allow that thou dost cherish reverential ideas of the attributes, the providence, and the dispensations of God; that

thou dost not wilfully profane his name, nor speak lightly of his sacred word. Allow that thou dost entertain a high esteem for his sacred word; defending it, as an excellent code of religious and moral duties, against the libertine attacks of scepticism. Allow that, from some sense of thy obligations to God and regard for the order of society, thou dost reverence the institutions of religion, and attend on the ministrations of the sanctuary. Advance thy pretensions thus high: and few of those who disclaim the imputation of their depravity can advance these bold pretensions. They are conceded to thee. These things thou hast done. On these thou dost rest thy claims to rectitude, to exemption from guilt. On these thou dost found a proud title to the favour of God.—O my soul! before thou dost thus presume to encounter the holy inspection of thy Almighty Judge, and to stand at his tribunal on the claims of thy own merit, let thy conscience answer for thee, the solemn inquiry, What hast thou left undone?

It is not superficial negative virtue which will constitute the perfection of thy nature, and satisfy the claims of thy Maker and Judge. Thy exemption from guilt, thy claims to innocence and uprightness, thy pretensions to the favour of God, must be founded on a sincere, supreme, universal obedience to his laws. This obedience is demanded by thy obligations, which reason will acknowledge, to devote to the God that made thee, to the great-

est and best of beings, thy supreme homage. By a powerful dictate of thy nature, thou art urged to admire and esteem excellence and goodness. Humble and feeble degrees of virtue in man, attract and receive thy warm regard. Oh! then, are not the most sacred fervours of admiration and love justly due to that Almighty Being who centres, in an infinite degree, every excellence in his adorable person, and from whom emanates every ray of goodness and bliss that illumines the universe? On thee, O my soul, this Almighty Being has exercised his bounty—thee he has crowned with the gifts of his love. To him, therefore, thou art bound by the most powerful obligations. From him thou hast derived thy existence; every noble power that exalts thee in the scale of being; all those aspiring desires, which limit thy powers of enjoyment only with the fruition of infinite perfection. On him, whose all-pervading spirit sustains universal nature, thou art dependent for every *present* enjoyment which swells thee with delight; for every blessing which, in the *anticipated* fruition, fills thee with transport.—Behold the claims of God to thy homage and obedience. I speak not now of the riches of his mercy in Jesus Christ; I speak not now of that infinite compassion which urged the Almighty Father to yield his only Son a sacrifice for thy sins; I unfold not now that stupendous mystery of love, into which angels desire to look, and which their most ardent

adorations but feebly celebrate. The infinite mercy of thy God, who spared thee, the wilful transgressor of his law, the contemner of his authority and justice, who even gave, for thy ransom from that misery and death into which sin had plunged thee, his beloved Son—the infinite grace of God in thy redemption, constitutes a claim to love more ardent than thy affections, even when inflamed with a coal from the altar of heaven, will be able to render. But the glory of this redemption is raised on the ruins of thy fallen nature; and while thou dost deny, or only imperfectly realize, thy guilt, fruitless would be the attempt, by displaying the wonders of redeeming mercy, to enforce thy obligations to thy God. I present, therefore, only the *acknowledged* claims of God to thy homage and obedience; and say,—if the graces and charms of goodness are calculated to command esteem and love; if a dependent creature feels deeply seated in his nature a sense of obligation to his Maker and Preserver;—on whom should thy supreme love be exercised, to whom should thy exalted obedience be rendered, but to him who, possessing in himself infinite perfection and happiness, has displayed on thee the glories of his goodness?

Say, then, my soul, hast thou rendered to God that love which is, on his part, the claim of acknowledged right; on thine, the dictate of generous gratitude and duty? Hast thou loved him, as in justice and in gratitude thou

wast bound, *sincerely, supremely, universally?* Hast thou considered it as thy highest honour, and has it been thy supreme delight, to contemplate and adore the glorious attributes of thy Creator; reverently and gratefully to trace the wonders of his providence and the riches of his mercy? Impressed with his infinite excellence, and with a lively conviction of thy dependence upon his power and thy obligations to his bounty, hast thou uniformly rendered him the tribute of homage and worship; earnestly supplicating his protection, and celebrating the displays of his goodness? To the Almighty Father of Spirits, to him who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, hast thou rendered not merely a cold, superficial worship, but the lively homage of thy heart? Has sacred communion with thy Almighty Father and Benefactor, in the exercises of prayer and praise, been observed not only as a public tribute, exacted by custom, extorted by a sense of decency, and at last rendered easy by habit; but has it been the exercise and the solace of thy retired hours? Has the holy principle of love to God transfused alacrity and delight into every act of obedience to him? Has it been the supreme principle, which animated every duty, which prompted sincere obedience to all his commands? Ah, my soul, presumptuous self-love has veiled from thee thy real character. Thou hast been asserting thy rectitude on thy exemption from *gross* crimes, and on thy *partial* obe-

dience to the divine commands, while thou hast been destitute of that *spiritual and universal holiness* which thy omniscient Judge requires. Thou hast founded thy claims to merit on thy *external* obedience to the laws of God, while thou hast been destitute of that *supreme love* to him which is thy highest duty, perfection, and happiness, and which must animate even the most exalted acts of virtue to render them acceptable in his sight.

Yes, my God, with deep humility I acknowledge the presumption which disclaimed my depravity and guilt. With deep humility, I acknowledge that thy grace has excited every emotion to goodness which animates my disordered nature. Forgetful have I been of thee, when the most powerful obligations, and the most tender motives urged my ardent love. Thou canst justly claim the sincere and universal service of my life: imperfect and partial has been my obedience. O God, when my *omissions* of duty thus involve me in the deepest guilt, what loud calls for the inflictions of thy justice do my *actual* transgressions present. My *presumptuous* sins rise before my dismayed conscience. O, who can disclose my *secret* faults! Alas, my iniquities are too many to be numbered. Yes, my God, from the impure fountain of my heart have flowed the noxious streams which have debased my nature, and swept away the vestiges of primeval glory. "Thou art found wanting,"—the sentence, marked by the fin-

ger of thy holiness on the most brilliant virtues of man, confounds the pretensions of human pride. The purest seraph that treads thy courts, most holy God, renouncing all claim to merit, casts his crown at thy throne. What emotions, then, should penetrate a worm of the dust, a polluted sinner, when he approaches his Maker and Judge! Ah, though arrayed in the righteousness of the most exalted saint, when the beams of thy glory dart upon me, it will become me, imitating the abasement of the inspired prophet, to lay my hand upon my mouth, and prostrate in the dust to deplore my sins—"Wo is me, for I am unclean."

Contemplate, then, O my soul, with profound humility, thy awful guilt. Consider thyself as excluded, by transgression, from that throne of glory, which, in thy state of innocence, thou wast permitted to approach. Consider thyself, while unrenewed by grace, as obnoxious to the displeasure of that God, who, from the essential holiness of his nature, must ever regard sin with abhorrence. Revolt not against the humiliating conviction of thy depravity; presume not to cast thy sins on the Being who made thee. Pure and upright thou didst come forth from his hallowed hands. But though blessed with his animating smiles, though admitted to the vision of his glory, though holding blissful communion with thy adorable Maker, wilfully yielding to temptation, thou didst transgress his com-

mands. His love infinitely surpassed thy deserts. Transgression had no sooner sunk thee into the abyss of guilt, than his mercy provided the means of thy restoration. Satan had no sooner triumphed in thy fall, and cast on thee his chains, than the price of thy ransom was laid on one that was mighty—than a glorious Redeemer was provided to destroy the power of the adversary. Sin had no sooner defaced thy primitive glory, than the fountain of grace was opened to renew and console thee. Inheriting from the first degenerate Adam, a fallen and polluted nature, thou mayest derive from thy glorious Representative, the divine Saviour of mankind, pardon, holiness, everlasting life. The sacrifice of his death, as the sacrifice of an all-perfect victim, is infinite in value; and, extending its efficacy to all mankind, restores them to the means and hopes of salvation. His quickening grace diffuses through the hearts of the degenerate offspring of Adam, the cheering light which conducts to the reconciled countenance of their God,—the invigorating strength which enables them to render that imperfect, but sincere obedience which his mercy will accept.

Thy guilt, therefore, O my soul, is increased by thy rejection of proffered grace. Thy condemnation is now aggravated by the impious contempt of the mercies of salvation, purchased for thee by a Saviour's merits, and pressed upon thee by the urgent entreaties

of a Saviour's love. In his state of perfection, thy first parent enjoyed the exalted bliss of communion with God. But glorious as was his state, animating as were his motives to obedience, the agonies of a divine Saviour consumed as a victim to incensed justice did not display to him the awful sanctions of the law of God. The glories of the *Word made flesh*, the blessings of salvation which flowed from the cross, did not swell his soul with the emotions of adoration, did not display to his astonished contemplation the surpassing condescension and love of the everlasting Jehovah. Ah, *thy* transgressions have cast contempt on the glories of the Son of God manifested in the flesh, to redeem thee; *thy* transgressions have repaid with mockery and insult the agonizing sufferings by which he atoned for thy guilt. Ah, my soul, *thy* sins, committed against brighter displays of glory, contemning more tremendous manifestations of divine justice, have involved thee in deeper guilt than that which crushed, under the curse of heaven, the wretched forefather of our race.

Here then, my soul, place the basis of thy repentance. Let the contemplation of thy fallen state excite penitential sorrow. Let the view of the ruins in which sin has involved thy once glorious nature, excite the lively conviction of thy need of the renovating grace of a Redeemer. Arrayed in the garments of mercy, he came, the divine Messenger of the Father, "to proclaim liberty to the captives,

to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort those who mourn." And until thou art sensible that the chains of sin enslave thee; until the view of the guilt of thy transgressions excites the anguish of thy conscience; until the just sentence of condemnation passed against thee penetrates thy spirit,—thou wilt not supplicate the saving power of thy Redeemer; thou wilt not implore the balm of divine mercy; thou wilt not seek to wash away the stains of thy guilt in the fountain of thy Saviour's grace.

Let then the lively sense of thy unworthiness be ever cherished, O my soul,—to humble thee in the sight of God, to awaken the fervours of thy repentance, to excite thee to seek peace and salvation by a lively faith in thy Redeemer's merits. Especially, when thou art called to celebrate his love, and to invoke his mercy, in the holy sacrament of his supper, be it thy care to form the most affecting views of thy lost estate. Who will cherish with the most fervent gratitude the precious emblems of the Saviour's love? Who will invoke with the most sincere solitude, that grace which this ordinance was designed to dispense? And who will experience, in their most exquisite fervours, those holy joys, which sometimes lift the soul to the city of the living God?—The humble Christian, who, cherishing a deep sense of his weakness, his unworthiness, his need of

mercy and grace, places his trust in that all-sufficient Saviour, who gave himself to be the *life of the world.*

THE PRAYER.

Ô GOD, who art infinitely pure and perfect, and in whose sight dwelleth nothing that is unholy or unclean ; with deep humility I confess the numerous sins which have defiled my conscience, and which call for the condemning sentence of thy justice. I acknowledge, O Lord, that thy laws are infinitely holy, just, and good ; calculated to advance the perfection of my nature, my present peace, and everlasting welfare. But, though thou hast mercifully endued me with that heavenly grace, by which I was enabled to work out my salvation, and through the merits of my blessed Redeemer, to obtain thy favour, with deep humility I confess, that I have disregarded the invitations of thy mercy, contemned the succours of thy grace, and defied, by wilful transgression, the terrors of thy justice. Enlightened by thy truth to discern the excellence of thy righteous laws, and endued with strength to resist the temptations which would seduce me from thy service, " I have yet done the things that I ought not to have done, and I have left undone the things that I ought to have done ; and there is no health in me." Alas, O Lord, by the numerous deficiencies of duty which have marked my life, by my repeated violations of thy laws, I have incurred thy displeasure ; I stand condemned at thy tribunal ; my conscience confirms the justice of that sentence which would banish me from thy presence. Blessed be thy name, thou hast spared me, O God of my salvation. In the exercise of infinite love, thou

hast laid on Jesus, thy eternal Son, the burden of my sins. O thou precious Lamb of God, who wast wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for my iniquities; whose agonizing sufferings, and all-sufficient merits are displayed to the eye of faith, in the lively memorials of the altar, hear the supplications which my soul, bowed down by its guilt and unworthiness, directs to thee, for pardon and salvation. Grant, O my Saviour, that while the emblems of thy sufferings and death forcibly impress on my heart the sense of my guilt, they may also be the seals and pledges of the mercy, the grace, and favour of my offended God. Holy Spirit, the source of quickening grace, whose sacred office it is to *convince of sin*, excite in my soul the conviction of my weakness and unworthiness. Blessed Guide and Comforter, lead my contrite spirit to repose its full trust in the merits of my Saviour. Almighty Father, whose just indignation I have incurred, cast me not off for ever;—listen to the interceding calls of thy mercy, to the powerful pleadings of my Saviour's blood, and turn from my guilty soul the severity of thy wrath. Recovered by thy mercy from the depths of guilt and misery, and restored by thy grace to health, purity, and peace, be all the glory of my redemption ascribed unto thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

MEDITATION.

Repentance.

O MY SOUL, if the conviction of thy fallen state, thus established by the declaration of *God* himself, by the view of the *world* around thee, by the history of human nature, by the faithful testimony of thine own *conscience*,—if this conviction of thy fallen state has been sincere, thou wilt perceive the necessity of deep *repentance*.

How shalt thou express thy sensibility to thy demerit, thy sorrow for the sins which have roused against thee the wrath of heaven, but by humble and earnest confession? How shalt thou awaken the mercy of that God whom thy sins have provoked, but by that unfeigned sorrow which the true penitent cherished? How wilt thou subdue the passions which destroy thy purity and peace, and continually plunge thee in transgression and guilt, but by the mortification and self-denial which are the principal constituents of genuine repentance? Thy Saviour hath declared that he came to “seek and to save that which was lost.” Thy Almighty Judge hath pronounced that he dispenses mercy only to those “who turn from their wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right.” Seek to

excite then, O my soul, by deep humiliation, the compassion of thy Saviour—by the vows of obedience which characterize the true penitent, prove that thou art steadfastly resolved to serve thy God, and thus lay thy humble claim to his mercy.

Thou art preparing to participate in that holy supper, where thou wilt be admitted to intimate communion with thy heavenly Father, where thou wilt engage, in the closest intercourse of love and duty, with thy blessed Redeemer. O consider, how lively should be thy contrition, how profound thy abasement, how universal thy renunciation of sin, how firm thy resolutions of obedience, how sincere thy repentance—when, by the most affecting symbols, thou dost devote thyself to thy Redeemer, and implore the mercy and grace of the God of thy salvation.

Art thou then desirous, O my soul, to be rescued from that guilt and condemnation into which sin has cast thee? Art thou desirous to be restored to the enjoyment of the reconciled countenance of thy God? Art thou desirous to enjoy the pure delight that enlivens the conscience which the blood of the Saviour hath cleansed from guilt? Art thou desirous to experience the powerful efficacy of that body and blood, by which Jesus redeems his penitent people? Art thou desirous to enjoy the refreshing grace of thy Almighty Saviour? Let thy most vigorous exertions be roused; let thy most fervent prayers be di-

rected to heaven, for the attainment of that evangelical *repentance* which is the only passport to purity and peace, to the mercy of thy Redeemer, to the favour of thy God.

Examine, then, faithfully, my soul, the characteristics of thy repentance. Recall to view the properties of this evangelical grace. **R**ecollect, there are counterfeits of repentance, by which many flatter and fatally deceive their own hearts. Ah, when God, inflexible and holy, sits in judgment on the soul, he will institute a scrutiny which will confound the hopes of the hypocrite. Holy Spirit, repentance is thy gift—quicken its holy exercises in my soul.

That thou mayest, in the awful day of retribution, escape the condemning judgment of God, investigate now, my soul, faithfully and seriously, the characteristics of thy repentance.

It is not sufficient that thy repentance should be founded solely in an *awful apprehension of divine wrath*. In a certain degree, and within certain bounds, an apprehension of the infliction of divine justice due to sin, is not only necessary to call forth the conviction, the sorrow, and the zeal of the *penitent*; but it is also the powerful principle which corrects the fervours of love, and which may at times animate the obedience of the *confirmed Christian*. For that *exalted fear* of God, which lies at the foundation both of the contrition of the penitent and the homage and duty of the Christian, in some degree arises from a lively and

awful impression of the *inflexible justice* of God, of the *wrath* which will overwhelm the contemners of his laws. What emotions of reverence should confound a worm of the dust, a polluted sinner, when he contemplates that holiness and justice, which encircle the throne at which he is to receive his eternal doom! Into the emotions of penitence, therefore, an *apprehension of divine wrath*, arising from the view of the justice, holiness, and power of God, and of our guilt and demerit, may justifiably enter. But when it is the sole, or even the dominant principle, it destroys the purifying and consoling efficacy of repentance. For a repentance which is founded only on an apprehension of divine wrath, is selfish and disingenuous in respect to its *motives*; it will also be feeble and superficial in its *sacrifices* and in its *services*. When uninfluenced by other more ingenuous and noble motives, a repentance characterized by the fear of divine wrath regards only the consequences of sin as incurring punishment, and keeps out of view its more aggravated characteristics, its ingratitude, its baseness, its criminality. This kind of repentance, therefore, may very well comport with an insensibility to the deformity of sin, and to its guilt as the violation of the law of God, the just and holy Judge of the world. A penitent, influenced only by an *awful apprehension of divine wrath*, will be earnestly anxious to avert the *penalties of sin*, but will not be solicitous to avoid the *commission*

of it. Cherishing his sinful passions, he will merely aim at those partial sacrifices, at that superficial obedience, by which he hopes to elude the sentence which God will pronounce on the presumptuous sinner. Unaffected by a sense of the evil of sin, and devoted to licentious enjoyments, he would riot in sensual indulgence, did not the apprehension of divine indignation arrest his guilty passions. His soul still retaining its aversion to holiness and virtue,—his is the repentance of unsubdued guilt, of terrified remorse: like the repentance of condemned spirits, who, trembling under the chains of hell, and consumed by its fires, seek a suspension of their torment, only to hurl their vengeance against the throne of heaven! Oh! what an insult is this base repentance to God, whom its slavish fears regard as a merciless tyrant; and who, it impiously supposes, will be satisfied with that hypocritical expression of sorrow which is extorted by the terrors of his justice! How unworthy is this degenerate repentance of the devout communicant, who, in the sufferings of his Saviour, portrayed in the emblems of the altar, beholds an excitement to the most lively and ingenuous sorrow!

It is not even enough that repentance should be founded on a view of the evil of sin as destructive to *the purity and peace of the soul*.

The purity and peace of the soul are inseparably connected, by the constitution of human nature, and by the appointment of

God, with obedience to his laws. Obedience to the decrees of the infinite source of perfection and power constitutes the harmony of the universe. Obedience to the will of the eternal fountain of intelligence and goodness constitutes the bliss of those countless myriads of spirits who encircle the throne of Jehovah, adoring his transcendent glory. Only in a conformity to the image, and in a sincere obedience to the will of his eternal Lawgiver and Judge, will man find pure and perfect bliss. All the powers of his nature tend to the eternal fountain of perfection as the centre of their enjoyment. In proportion as they are exercised upon God, as they are regulated by his will, and as they are enlivened by the smiles of his favour, will be the happiness of man in the present life, and his capacity for the fruition of the blissful presence of his God in the life to come. When, therefore, thou dost consider, O, my soul, that by disobedience to the laws of God, thou hast forfeited thy claim to his favour; and that, in departing from the infinite source of perfection and goodness, thou hast forsaken the "fountain of living waters," and hast sought to gratify thy desires at the unsatisfying "cisterns" of worldly pleasure—when thou dost contemplate the disorder in which sin has cast thy once perfect powers—when, convicted and alarmed, thou dost consider the infamy, the guilt, the misery which attend the indulgence of unholy passions—thou dost behold the most powerful motives to

deep humiliation, to lively sorrow. But, even here, the glow of contrition is tarnished by the selfish principle by which it is excited. Transgression has destroyed thy peace, has cut thee off from the divine fountain of felicity, has debased thy powers, has blasted thy enjoyments. Dishonour, misery, and destruction, are the fruits of thy sinful course. Here there is not a motive to repentance which does not terminate in *self*, which does not draw all its force from a regard to thy own welfare. Ah, if indeed the consequences of sin involved only thy own purity and peace, motives drawn from these considerations would constitute the sole springs of thy repentance. But thy transgressions have defied the authority, and have contemned the mercy of thy God and Saviour. There are, therefore, motives to contrition still more noble—motives more worthy of those ingenuous emotions with which the penitent should commemorate, in the holy supper, the infinite love of his Redeemer.

Thy penitential sorrow, therefore, should be founded on a deep sense of the evil of sin, as a *presumptuous contempt of the righteous authority of God*.

Consider that, as the infinite source of perfection, power, and goodness, he justly claims the homage of the universe. Consider that his omnipotent hand sustains and governs all things; himself the sovereign Lord of nature. Consider that the object of that dominion which he exercises over the world, is the ad-

vancement of the purity and happiness of all the orders of intelligent creatures. Consider that, as thy eternal Maker, thy omnipotent Lawgiver, thy just and holy Judge, he claims thy supreme, thy uniform obedience. Ah, by transgression thou hast impiously refused to render that homage which universal nature offers to its omnipotent Maker and Lord—By transgression thou hast spurned thy dependence on that almighty arm which preserves thee in being, and which, in a moment, could crush thee into the dust, whence it raised thee—By transgression thou hast revolted against the righteous dominion of the Sovereign of the universe, and sought to defeat the beneficent purposes of his sway—By transgression thou hast defied the infinite power of thy Maker, thou hast contemned the righteous mandates of thy supreme Lawgiver, thou hast raised the arm of defiance against the omnipotent Judge of heaven and earth. Oh, by what profound contrition must thou seek to avert the wrath which impends over thy rebellion!

Until we are deeply impressed with the supreme claims of God to our homage and obedience; until we discern and acknowledge his power, his justice, and his holiness; the awful presumption of sin, as a contempt of his authority, will not be displayed in full force. The throne on which God exercises the dominion of the universe, is founded on his inviolable holiness and justice. To resist his authority, *to violate his laws*, is therefore presumptuous-

ly to condemn these exalted attributes, and to rebel against that righteous government, the subversion of which would overwhelm the purity and glory of the universe. The true penitent, therefore, will humbly acknowledge, that his guilt is aggravated by the contempt of the authority of God with which it is marked. Casting his eyes on the sacrifice of the altar, he will behold, in the agonies of the almighty victim, there immolated under affecting symbols, the infinite price which God exacted, as the vindication of his violated authority, and the enormity of that guilt which rendered an infinite sacrifice necessary. At the altar, therefore, the devout communicant will, in profound abasement, adore the sovereignty of God, and pour forth his penitential sorrow for his presumptuous violations of the laws of the righteous Maker and Judge of the world.

The view of sin, which is calculated to awaken in the penitent the most lively conviction of its baseness and enormity, and to excite a generous sorrow, has not yet been displayed. To all the other powerful aggravations of sin will be added the characteristic of base *insensibility* and *ingratitude*, when the penitent regards it as a *deliberate and wilful contempt of the infinite mercy and love of God*. That by transgression we have incurred divine wrath; that by transgression we have destroyed our purity and peace; that by transgression we have defied the righteous and beneficent authority of God—are considerations powerfully calcula-

ted to display the evil of sin, and to excite profound sorrow for it. But the affecting consideration, that by transgression we have discovered base *insensibility* to the *goodness* of God, and ungratefully *contemned* his infinite love, displays, in its full enormity, our guilt, and constitutes the most ingenuous source of true repentance. Yes, my soul, thou hast withheld the tribute of just and generous homage from that glorious Being who centres in himself all loveliness and perfection. Thou hast withheld the tribute of just and generous gratitude from thy Almighty Father, Preserver, and Benefactor,—who has guided and defended thee when helpless and exposed,—who has cherished thee with an affection which even thy neglect and insensibility could not overcome,—who has crowned thee with mercy and loving-kindness,—who has provided for thee an eternal and glorious destiny beyond the grave. Ah, thou hast not only been *deficient* in the exalted acts of gratitude and duty. By *repeated and wilful transgressions* of his commands, thou hast discovered *indifference* to his love, and *contempt* of his mercy. Thou hast even slighted the most exalted display of his goodness, the gift of his only Son to redeem thee. Oh, my soul, thou hast sinned, not against a hard and cruel master, whose service was burdensome and without reward; not against a merciless sovereign, who ruled thee *with the sceptre of wrath*; but against thy *most compassionate* Father, thy most gene-

rous Benefactor, thy most tender Friend; against that merciful Redeemer, who shrunk not from the ignominy of the cross to purchase thy redemption. Oh! what emotions of ingenuous sorrow will agitate the bosom of the sincere penitent, when he beholds, in the transcendent love of his Redeemer and God, the representation of his ingratitude and guilt! Penetrated with disinterested sorrow, he will humble his soul in the deepest contrition; and by the fervours of his repentance, seek to testify that he is, at last, awakened to the affecting force of those infinite mercies which he so long contemned.

The sacrifice of the altar was designed to convey a lively representation of the sufferings and death of Christ. The altar, therefore, is the throne where the sincere penitent will pour forth the confession of his sins. When, prostrate before its hallowed symbols, he beholds the body of his Saviour broken and bruised, and the precious blood of the Lamb of God shed forth as an atoning sacrifice, the enormity and guilt of his sins, which could so long resist and condemn the infinite love of his Redeemer, will dissolve his soul in ingenuous and fervent penitence.

THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL and Almighty God! whose authority I have violated, whose power I have defied, whose justice I have contemned, whose mercy I have re-

sisted, by my repeated and aggravated transgressions—sensible of my baseness, my presumption, my ingratitude and guilt, I now humbly cast myself at the throne of thy mercy, and implore thy forgiveness. O thou Father of mercies, whose compassions fail not, whose love and pity cannot be subdued by the ingratitude and sins of man, vouchsafe to pardon and bless the unworthy sinner who sees no refuge from the just sentence of condemnation, but in the gracious overtures of salvation which thou hast proclaimed through Jesus Christ, the Son of thy love. Praises evermore be ascribed unto thee, that thou hast declared thou art willing to accept, through Jesus thy Son, the imperfect but sincere repentance of the awakened sinner. O do thou inspire in my heart that humble, lively, and ingenuous contrition which is alone thy gift. Spirit of the Father! fountain of quickening grace! awaken in me a deep sense of the evil and guilt of my sins, that with humble and earnest sorrow I may deplore and confess them. Set before my conscience the terrors of that wrath to which sin renders me obnoxious, the degrading impurity and misery in which it has plunged me. But, oh! let the liveliest emotions of sorrow arise from the view of my guilt and ingratitude, in having contemned the righteous authority, the infinite mercies of my God and Saviour. Almighty God, let me not seek to extenuate the guilt of my transgressions, or to offer to thee an imperfect repentance. But mercifully grant, that, humbly deploring my guilt, and confessing my unworthiness, I may approach to thy holy altar, and there be restored to thy reconciled countenance, through the prevailing merits and efficacy of the body and blood of him who died for my sins, Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

MEDITATION.

Resolutions of obedience. The invigorating and sanctifying agency of the Holy Spirit.


THE important object of repentance, to which indeed all its genuine exercises tend, is the restoration of the soul to holiness. We can have no claim to the favour of a just and holy God; we are not indeed capable of enjoying the pure and perfect bliss of his presence, until the dominion of sin is subverted in our hearts; until we are reinstated in the graces of the divine image. Every expression of repentance is vain and presumptuous, unless it proceeds from a heart supremely desirous to be released from the dominion of sinful passions—and to obtain that purity which only conducts to the favour of God, to satisfying peace, to unfailing joy in his presence. “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.”

To release us from the bondage of sin was the object which brought down from the mansions of bliss the eternal Son of the Highest. It was the object for which he promulgated his divine instructions, and for which he displayed the example of a spotless life. It was the object which animated all his labours; which conducted him, cheerful and triumphant, through his bitter sufferings. It was the

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object for which he finally shed, on the cross, that precious blood which was to be the seal and the means of our deliverance from sin; for which he poured forth the Holy Spirit to sanctify our degenerate nature. While, therefore, unholy passions enthrall us; while we are destitute of those virtues by which we must be qualified for everlasting happiness—in vain for us will the Son of God have published his divine instructions—in vain for us will he have displayed his glorious example—in vain for us will he have triumphantly sustained the sufferings and death of the cross—in vain for us will he have purchased the renovating gifts of the Holy Spirit. Ah, these powerful aids and motives to holy obedience, perverted and contemned, will strip us of all excuse for our impenitence; will silence the pleas by which we may seek to extenuate our continuance in sin; and will arm with heavier vengeance the sentence of almighty justice.

Contemplate, O, my soul, the import of the holy rite which thou art to celebrate. Contemplate the lively exhibition which the sacrifice of the altar affords, both of the inflexible — *justice* of God, and his infinite *mercy*. Contemplate, under the affecting symbols there exhibited, the love of the Saviour, who exposed himself to the fires of divine justice to avert from thee their fury. And if, after this awful and affecting exhibition, no desires are awakened to be delivered from the dominion of those sins which called forth the wrath of



heaven on thy innocent Redeemer—if, after this penetrating view, no desires are excited to testify, by thy vows of love and duty, thy gratitude to thy God and Saviour; to obtain, by a life of holy obedience, the enjoyment of their favour,—thou art utterly unworthy to partake of an ordinance, to the exalted tendency of which thou art entirely insensible—thou art utterly unworthy to receive those inestimable communications of mercy and grace, which, in this sacrament, are granted to the prayers and vows of the humble and faithful. Oh! to receive the body and blood of the Saviour into a heart, which, cherishing unholy passions, contemns his authority and mercy, and erects the throne of rebellion against him,—would display a presumption deserving the most severe punishment which infinite justice can inflict.

By every consideration which awakened thy lively *sorrow* for sin, thou art excited, O, my soul, to the most earnest desires to be rescued from its *dominion*—thou art urged to the most zealous vows of *duty* and *obedience*. How canst thou expect to escape the *wrath* of God, while, by cherishing thy sins, and persevering in rebellion against him, thou dost expose thyself to his just displeasure? How canst thou expect to enjoy that *peace* which diffuses its enlivening influence only through the conscience that is redeemed from guilt, when thou dost cherish those unholy passions which produce anxiety and remorse? How canst thou ex-

pect to avoid the guilt of *rebellion* against the righteous authority of the Sovereign of the universe, when the sensual passions which rule in thee bear testimony, that thy expressions and vows of penitence are insincere, that thou dost oppose the just claims of God to thy obedience? How canst thou avert the opprobrium of the basest *insensibility* and *ingratitude*, while the display of the mercies of God, and of the riches of his love towards thee in Jesus Christ, cannot induce thee to relinquish the sins which are daily abusing his mercy, which are daily renewing the pangs that rent the bosom of thy Saviour? Ah, my soul, while sin reigns in thy affections; while wilful violations of the laws of God defile thy conscience; though thy pretended sorrow should burst forth in reiterated confessions and supplications, thou art still obnoxious to divine wrath—still the slave of degrading pleasures—still exposed to the pangs of apprehension and remorse:—thou art still the presumptuous rebel against the authority of God, the guilty contemner of his love.

There is no way in which thou canst prove that thy repentance is genuine, in which thou canst obtain a title to the love and favour of God, or in which thou canst prepare for being a worthy guest at the table of the Lord, but by earnest and uniform desire to be delivered from the dominion of sin, by sincere vows of obedience to thy God and Saviour.

Let, then, thy desires to be delivered from

the dominion of sin, and thy vows of duty and obedience, be *sincere* and *lively*.

If in proportion to the disgrace and misery of the evils that oppress us, should be the sincerity and warmth of our desires to be released from them; deliverance from the degrading and miserable bondage of sin should awaken the most sincere and lively desires of our hearts. If in proportion to the magnitude of the favours which we have received from a benefactor, and the value of the blessings which he has still in store for us, should be the sincerity and ardour of our devotion to him; the vows of obedience to our heavenly Father and Redeemer, who is the source of all our blessings, and of all our hopes, should awaken the highest fervour of our affections. From a dominion that destroys our purity and peace, we seek to be delivered. To a merciful and gracious God, who is worthy of our highest homage, and who claims our most ardent gratitude, we are to vow allegiance. The most splendid object of worldly desire sinks in the comparison with the concerns of our eternal destiny. Desires and resolutions, if possible, infinitely more ardent than those which impetuously urge us in the pursuit of worldly enjoyments, should be devoted to the attainment of that spiritual redemption, of that fidelity and zeal in the service of God, which are the only pledges of our peace. Thy desires and resolutions, O, my soul, are to be offered up to a God who searches the heart; who,

jealous of his honour, and claims of his authority, will resent and punish the hypocritical and superficial professions of love and obedience. Thinkest thou he will behold thee panting with desire in the pursuit of worldly pleasure, vowing ardent devotion to the idols of honour and wealth; and when to him thy most sincere love, thy most zealous obedience are due, be himself content with the feeble homage of affections which are wasting their fervours on debasing and transitory gratifications? View the prodigies of love in the sufferings and death commemorated on the altar. Contemplate the blessings of that spiritual banquet which a merciful Redeemer hath provided. Redemption from sin and its pangs; restoration to the favour of God, and the never-failing consolations of his love; purity of heart, and the inexpressible peace which is always its attendant; communion with God, and the divine pleasures which he pours upon the soul; a lively foretaste of the joys of heaven,—these are the exalted blessings which, in the spiritual banquet of his body and blood, the love of thy Saviour has prepared for thee. Impenetrable and hardened art thou, if blessings thus exalted do not excite thy most ardent desires; lost to every amiable feeling, and deserving of the wrath of heaven, if, at the very moment when thy Saviour displays the depths of his sufferings, and offers thee the eternal blessings which were *purchased* by them, thou canst repay his love *with superficial* vows of duty.

It is not enough that thy desires and resolutions be lively and sincere; they must be *uniform* and *universal*.

Those desires and resolutions cannot be sincere, which, while they urge us to make partial sacrifices to the laws of God, still seek to retain some favourite gratifications. Those desires and resolutions cannot be sincere, which are only occasionally and rarely exerted. The ardours of holy desire and resolution should glow with *steady* and *uniform* fervour. No temptations, however seducing, should damp them; no duties, however difficult, should arrest them. The true penitent, who is awakened to a due sense of the immense debt of gratitude which he owes to his Almighty Father and Redeemer, will not measure his obedience by the cold calculations of selfish policy. His vows of duty will burst forth from a heart beating with grateful love. His vows of obedience will embrace all the sacrifices to which devotion to his blessed Lord may call him. They will extend to every act of duty by which he may advance the honour of his Redeemer and God.

Let, then, thy most ardent desires, O my soul, be *uniformly* exerted for deliverance from the dominion of sinful passions, and for a restoration to the image of thy Maker. Offer not to God resolutions of duty, the fruit of transitory glows of feeling. Let thy vows of allegiance be founded on a deep conviction of the obligations that should bind thee to

him, of ~~the~~ ennobling nature of his service, and of its glorious rewards. Except not from thy vows of obedience any precept of thy Saviour, though it may require thee to relinquish the indulgence to which thou dost cling with supreme affection. Resolve on that *universal* obedience to his commands which he requires, and which alone he will accept. Then "shalt thou not be confounded, when thou hast respect unto *all* his commandments." When disposed to murmur at the severity of the sacrifices to which he calls thee, at the extent and difficulty of his service, cast thy view upon the altar, contemplate the number and poignancy of his sufferings for thee, explore the riches of his mercy and grace—and blush that thou hast for a moment indulged an ungrateful murmur; lament the inadequacy of thy most zealous services to repay the debt of love, and offer to the gracious Redeemer, who bought thee with his blood, the *best* tribute thou canst render, though insufficient and unworthy—*zealous* and *uniform* obedience to *all* his commands.

Thy desires for redemption from the dominion of sin, and thy resolutions of obedience, must be accompanied with thy own *vigorous exertions*, and with the *diligent use of all the means of grace*.

To work out thy salvation is, indeed, the business that should occupy thy supreme care. Consider how potent the sway which sin *maintains over thy affections*. Consider how deep

the stain of iniquity which is to be washed away. Consider how strong the chains of corrupt passion from whose thralldom thou art to be freed. Consider how holy the graces with which thou must be invested. Consider how extensive and important the circle of duties thou must resolve to discharge. Consider how many sacrifices must be made, how many obstacles must be surmounted, in that course of holy obedience to God which thou art bound to render. Wilt thou indulge the expectation, that to fulfil these momentous engagements, feeble and occasional efforts only will be necessary? Wilt thou hope to subdue the dominion of sensual passions by those slight exertions which thou wouldst deem it folly to apply to any temporal enterprise that was difficult or hazardous? Ah, the new and holy life, at which thou must aim as the only pledge of thy salvation, is opposed to the most powerful propensities of thy fallen nature, to the spirit of a corrupt world, to the pleasures which from a thousand quarters assail thee with their insinuating solicitations. Oh! what vigorous exertions, what bold resolution, what determined courage will be necessary to surmount the obstacles which will oppose thee in thy Christian course, and to enable thee to persevere, with unshaken fidelity, in the service of thy God. The utmost strength which thou wilt be able to bring to the contest with thy spiritual enemies, the most vigorous exertions which thou wilt be

able to ~~engage~~ in the discharge of the high duties of the Christian life, will prove vain, unless invigorated by the *diligent use of the means of grace*. By devout reflection on the ennobling privileges of thy holy vocation; by the serious perusal of the pages of divine truth; by humble and regular attendance on the ministrations and ordinances of the sanctuary, where the God of grace is ever ready to bless his penitent worshippers; above all, by frequent and earnest prayer for the influences of the Holy Spirit;—by these pious exercises only wilt thou be able to advance in the course of holiness, with that increasing zeal which will insure success. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, thou mayest attain the most exalted heights of Christian virtue, but “without him thou canst do nothing.” *The grace of God is sufficient* for the most difficult trials—*his strength* will be gloriously *perfected in the weakness* of the most humble of his children. By his almighty *Spirit*, “the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified.” The work of sanctification, by which the soul is redeemed from sin, and reinstated in the divine image, is, in its commencement, its progress, and its consummation, conducted by the agency of the Spirit of God. Not independently on *human exertions*, but through their *instrumentality*, does this blessed Spirit effect the renovation of the soul. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do.* In-

scrutable, but claiming our supreme adoration and gratitude, is the wonderful method by which God accomplishes our redemption. The Spirit of the Most High descends and dwells in corrupt and fallen man. O my soul, let the unsearchable wisdom of God prostrate the doubts of thy erring reason. Let not that mysterious agency, by which thy redemption is effected, excite thy scorn. Justly due to God is the tribute of profound gratitude, that by the incomprehensible but powerful communion of his Holy Spirit with thee, he pours light and glory on thy blind and corrupt affections. Humbly and thankfully embrace the proffered grace of God. Fervently and unceasingly implore its sanctifying influences. Relying on its powerful succours, aim at subduing every depraved passion; vow eternal allegiance to the Lord thy God; resolutely engage in that life of holiness to which thy Saviour's commands call thee. Behold! he leaves thee not defenceless—he imposes not restrictions and duties, without conveying to thee his invigorating aids—he does not call thee to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, the enemies of thy salvation, without providing armour for the warfare, heavenly rewards to crown thy victories. Behold! spread on the altar are the symbols of that divine body and blood, which convey immortal joys, invincible strength, to the souls of his penitent people. Go, my soul, seal over these symbols of his love the holy resolution to re-

nounce ~~thy~~ sins, those enemies of his cross, those ~~enemies~~ of thy peace. Go, my soul, over these precious symbols of his love, vow eternal fidelity to the Lord—take up the cross and follow him, though the path lie through the vale of suffering and death.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD of everlasting mercy and salvation ! infinite source of compassion and love ! Worthy art thou to receive blessing, and honour, and adoration, and praise from all in heaven, and all in earth. For thou hast made all things ; for thy good pleasure they are, and were created ; and from thee, the everlasting fountain of perfection, flow the glory and excellence of all the works of thy hands. Worthy art thou, O God of eternal mercies, to receive the supreme homage and service of the children of men : For thou hast washed away their sins in the blood of thy Son ; thou hast opened to them, through the merits of a Redeemer, the prospect of immortal blessedness beyond the grave. Penetrated with a sense of thy majesty and glory, with a lively view of thine infinite compassion and love, I acknowledge thy claims to my homage and obedience—I acknowledge that all the powers of my soul, with ardent affection and gratitude, should ever have adored thy power, and celebrated thy praise—I acknowledge that the sincere and constant service of my life should have proclaimed my devotion to thee, the profound sense of obligation to thy bounty and love. Author of my being ! God of my salvation ! I bow myself in the dust before thee, under the conviction

of the presumption and insensibility which have so long disclaimed thy authority, and resisted the displays of thy mercy. Awakened to a lively sense of the ingratitude and baseness of my sinful course, of the deplorable folly and guilt of that career of transgression by which I have rebelled against thee, I now desire to return unto thee, O my God, to cast myself at the foot of thy throne, imploring thy forgiveness—I now desire to relinquish those corrupting and disappointing pleasures, for which I have contemned thy authority and laws, and forfeited the joys of thy favour—I desire to be rescued from the dominion of my sinful passions, which are offensive to thee, most holy God, and which terminate in shame, remorse, and misery—fervently do I desire to devote myself to thy service, to obtain the satisfying joys of thy mercy and loving-kindness. O most compassionate Father! hear and accept the sincere vows of duty which I offer at thy throne. Thee, O God, I desire to choose as my refuge and portion—to thy glory and praise I resolve to devote all the powers of my soul—for that purity which will conform me to thine image, I ardently pant—resolutely do I engage to fulfil all thy commands—cheerfully will I sustain all the sacrifices which thy service may require me to make—vigorously will I oppose the temptations and difficulties that would seduce or intimidate my allegiance to thee—to thy disposal I resign myself; patiently will I submit to all the chastenings of thy hand. Thou knowest the humble sincerity of my heart—thou knowest also, O God, its weakness and depravity. O save me from a presumptuous dependence on my own strength. Teach me evermore to rely on thee—to implore the succours of thy Holy Spirit. Excite me diligently to use all the means of illumination and grace. By

the exercises of meditation and prayer, may I seek to fortify myself for the conflict with sin and temptation. O God! on thy grace is my sole dependence—evermore refresh my soul by its succours and consolations. O grant that, by humble and earnest prayer, and by diligent attendance on the ordinances of thy Church, I may obtain the influences of thy Holy Spirit. By his almighty power may my corrupt nature be quickened, renovated, and redeemed. Encouraged by thy gracious invitations, and humbly relying on thy mercy, I go to the sacred supper, where thou hast provided for thy people heavenly and immortal food. O, when, at his holy table, over the symbols of his body and blood, I celebrate the love of my Saviour, and renew the vows of duty and obedience,—Spirit of God, impart to my soul thy holy unction—shed thy invigorating and consoling graces—seal me to the day of redemption—that finally advanced, by thy power, to the courts of the celestial temple of the living God, I may celebrate the love of my Saviour in unceasing and eternal strains—and join in the jubilee of adoration and praise to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

THURSDAY MORNING.

MEDITATION.

Faith in Christ.

As a creature and a sinner, man is dependent on the will of his Sovereign Maker and Judge. Whatever God prescribes or com-

mands, that immediately becomes his duty and happiness. God, in infinite wisdom and goodness, has provided a plan of salvation for fallen man. By the inscrutable determination of the Almighty Father, the eternal Son, in the person of man, sustains the penalties of a violated law; and his obedience, sufferings, and death, are accepted as an all-sufficient atonement to offended justice. All the blessings of salvation are conveyed to us, through the meritorious atonement of Christ; and *faith in him* is made the indispensable condition of our enjoying these blessings. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Even then, if *faith* did not involve the exercise of the noblest powers of the understanding, and the most amiable virtues of the heart; if it were not the powerful principle which purifies the soul, and inspires every act of holy obedience—still, as the *command* of our Almighty Lawgiver and Judge, as the *prescribed condition* of our salvation, it must appear a necessary duty; and it would evidence the most criminal presumption, as well as the greatest folly, to disregard it. The holy sacrament of the supper presents the Saviour offered up an almighty victim for sin. His sufferings and death are represented as the meritorious cause of our redemption. The only fountain of pardoning mercy and redeeming grace is opened in his body and blood. While, therefore, we are ignorant of these truths, or insensible to

them, we cannot be prepared for approaching that ordinance which derives from them all its efficacy. Until we cordially believe that the eternal Son of God, in our nature, shed his blood to purchase our redemption; until we believe, that through his merits alone we can have access unto the throne of our offended Judge, and that by his grace we must be sanctified and restored to the favour of God; the holy sacrament of his supper, where he is set forth as crucified for our redemption, will appear an unmeaning rite; our participation of it would only be a mockery of God and the Saviour, and tend to the condemnation of our souls. Pardon, salvation, and grace, the blessings of this sacred ordinance, are conveyed only to the *true believer*. The penitent, who is awakened to a sense of his guilt and his subjection to sin, will never experience rest or peace, until he heartily embraces the truths, that the blood of the Saviour is all-sufficient to cleanse from sin, and his grace all-powerful to redeem from its dominion.

Let, then, thy most earnest solicitude, O my soul, be directed to the examination, whether thou dost possess that *lively faith in God's mercy through Christ*, which will convey to thee holiness and peace, and make thee an acceptable guest at the table of the Lord.

Rest not satisfied in a faith which embraces the Gospel merely as a *well authenticated record of facts*. Thou mayest acknowledge the birth, life, and miracles of the Saviour. Thou may-

est cherish a high esteem for his character and instructions. But what will this faith avail thee, while thou dost refuse to receive the Saviour as thy merciful and almighty *Lord* and *Master*, by whose righteous laws thou art to be *guided*, by whose precious blood thou art to be *redeemed*, by whose gracious spirit thou art to be *sanctified* and *governed*? Was it not his primary, his sole object, to effect the redemption of fallen man from the guilt and dominion of sin? Are not his all-sufficient merits and grace presented to us as the certain means of our salvation? A faith which, passing over these infinitely momentous objects of the Redeemer's mission, regards him merely as a *distinguished personage*, and barely assents to the various *events of his life*, offers the most presumptuous affront to the dignity and glory of the Saviour, and can lay no claim to the blessings of his salvation.

Equally futile and presumptuous is a faith which embraces the Gospel only as a system of *speculative truth*. The superficial faith just mentioned embraces the Gospel as an authentic *history* of facts; while it is indifferent to the *truths* which it promulgates, and the *duties* which it enjoins. This *speculative faith* advances further, and regarding Christ as the author of *divine truth*, forms from his Gospel a system of *doctrines* which it embraces on the ground of divine authority. But this faith is fundamentally defective, in considering the doctrines of Christ as intended merely to correct

and regulate the *opinions* of men, and not principally to purify their *hearts*. It is wholly insensible to the important truth, that the doctrines of the Gospel are designed to redeem us from error and sin, and to establish in the heart all divine and holy graces. This speculative faith will never impress on the soul her subjection to sin and misery, her need of divine mercy and grace—it will never awaken the exalted emotions of love and gratitude to God, for the gift of his Son to be the Redeemer of fallen man—it will never excite that peace and joy which arise from the experience of the mercy of the Redeemer, and which urge to generous and universal obedience to his commands. Unfruitful either of holiness or peace, it cannot be a passport to the favour of that God who requires the homage of the *heart*; it cannot confer an interest in the merits of that Saviour who came to establish in the soul the kingdom of *righteousness, peace, and joy*.

Beware also of resting in an *imperfect* or *obscure* faith, which does not *thoroughly comprehend* the *plan of salvation*, and which is not deeply sensible of its *value* and *efficacy*.

Dost thou entertain, O my soul, only superficial views of the evil and guilt of sin, and of the necessity of the *grace* of the Saviour to redeem thee from its power? Instead of regarding his precious blood as the only fountain of pardon, and his almighty grace as the only source of holiness; dost thou content

thyself with an occasional, a lukewarm confidence in his merits and power? Dost thou rest thy hopes of salvation on the superficial ideas which thou dost entertain of Christ, as a benevolent personage, who is to procure thy pardon with an offended God—instead of cordially receiving him, in all his offices, as the divine *Prophet* who is to instruct thee in the will of God—as the merciful *High Priest*, by whose atonement and intercession thou art to have access unto the Father—as the glorious *King*, by whose laws thou art to be governed, to whose righteous authority thou art to be subject, by whose victorious grace thou art to be defended and finally exalted to everlasting glory? Ah, my soul! this *imperfect* and *obscure* faith in the Saviour, on which thou dost rest thy salvation, will disappoint and condemn thee. Weak and irresolute, it will not allay the pangs of guilt; it will not repel the assaults of temptation; it will not subdue the power of sinful passion; it will not inspire thee with serenity and hope at that tribunal, where a *supreme* affiance on thy Saviour's merits will be thy only refuge from the condemning scrutiny of thy Almighty Judge.

The faith, then, which is effectual to salvation, and which, in the participation of the holy supper, will vitally unite the devout communicant to his Lord and Saviour, does **not** consist in a bare acknowledgment of the truth of the *facts* recorded concerning the character and life of Christ; in a speculative belief in

his Gospel, as an excellent *theory* of religious and moral truth; or in a *loose* and *general* trust in the Saviour, without a clear, lively, and just apprehension of his character and offices. To approach the altar with these imperfect, speculative, and feeble views of the Saviour, would be casting dishonour on the precious efficacy of his blood—insult and mockery on his divine dignity and power.

That *genuine faith* which will lead the soul to Christ as her only refuge, must be founded on a *lively conviction of our guilt and misery*. On the degeneracy and guilt of human nature is the superstructure of redemption raised. Merely to *instruct* mankind; merely to *improve* the code of moral duties; merely to display an *example* of virtue, it surely was not necessary that the *eternal Son of the Highest* should divest himself of the majesty and bliss of the Godhead, should descend into this vale of sin and misery, and veil his eternal glories in the horrors of the cross. Man is a fallen and guilty creature. A divine Personage only can vindicate the insulted Majesty of heaven, and by his sufferings and death appease the claims of divine justice. Behold here the truths which develope the mystery of redemption; which present an object worthy of the infinite condescension of the Son of God; which shed resplendent light on the gloom that envelops the cross. “The word was made flesh,” “the Son of God humbled himself to the death of the cross,” that man, “dead in trespasses and

sins," might be "quickened" to the glorious hopes of pardon, holiness, and immortality. From a lively conviction then of thy guilt and misery, O my soul, must arise the virtue of evangelical faith. This conviction alone will awaken a sense of thy urgent need of a Saviour, and excite thy earnest desires for his pardoning mercy and renovating grace. "Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost." "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Lost to the favour of God, and to every claim to his mercy, thou must acknowledge thyself to be, before thou wilt repose on the merits and power of him who is mighty to save. The taint of sin thou must deeply feel and deplore, before thou wilt have recourse to the purifying fountain opened in the Redeemer's blood. Thou must be *earnestly desirous* to be rescued from the condemning bondage of sin, before thou wilt embrace the glorious Saviour offered to thee, under the symbols of the altar, in the satisfying fulness of his mercy and grace.

The faith which will vitally unite thee to thy Redeemer, and prove effectual to thy salvation, founded on a deep sense of thy guilt and misery, must lead thee *cordially, supremely, and joyfully, to rely on the all-sufficient merits of Christ for pardon, and on his all-powerful grace for complete redemption.* God hath "set forth his Son to be propitiation for the sins of the world;" and it is his merciful declaration, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but

should have everlasting life." When, by the conviction of his guilt, condemnation, and misery, "every high and lofty imagination is brought down," the sinner will be disposed humbly to submit to the plan which the wisdom and goodness of God have provided for his redemption. When his understanding is "enlightened to discern" the excellence and glory of the Saviour, and the divine mercy and grace which are shed around the eternal Son of the Father; when he views the fulness of peace and salvation in that divine Redeemer who invites "the weary and heavy laden to come unto him and receive rest"—the humble and contrite sinner will repose with *cordial, supreme*, and *joyful affiance* on him whom "God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour," to dispense to the penitent pardon, grace, and everlasting redemption.

Disclaiming all presumptuous dependence on his own righteousness and strength, the reliance of the true believer on his Saviour is *entire and supreme*. In the merits and power of Jesus Christ he discerns his only refuge from the terrors of a violated law; the only means of his redemption from the dominion of sin; the only armour with which he can repel the assaults of his spiritual enemies; his only pledge of exaltation to the felicities of heaven. Evermore "looking unto Jesus" for ~~every~~ every spiritual blessing, he will, with supreme and grateful affection, adore and bless his Saviour, as "the author and finisher of his salvation."

'To his Redeemer, rich in grace and mercy, he clings with faith *lively* and *vigorous*—a faith which, realizing the all-sufficiency of the atonement of Christ, the almighty power of his grace, and his infinite willingness to save, allays every apprehension, and inspires holy hope and triumph.

The reliance of the true believer in his Saviour, is also *uniform* and *steadfast*. Emphatically it may be said of him, that he "*lives by faith*." Faith is the animating principle which inspires and preserves his spiritual life—the fountain whence flow all his virtues and all his consolations.

But it is the consummation of the excellence of genuine faith, and it is its inseparable characteristic, that it "*works by love*," that "it *purifies the heart*," that it "*overcomes the world*." Faith is, in the true believer, an active principle, which is ever inspiring him with the most ardent love to that God who has mercifully provided for him the means of redemption, and to that Saviour through whom alone he is redeemed from sin, and misery, and death. It is an invigorating principle, which is ever urging the true believer to testify, by the most exalted acts of obedience, the divine love which warms his heart; and to endeavour to advance, by the uniform service of his life, the honour and glory of his God and Saviour. It is a purifying principle which, by subduing the dominion of sin, removes sense of guilt from the conscience; which, by the impressing upon

the soul the holy image of God, restores her to the joys of her favour; which prepares us for the felicity of heaven, by forming in us those holy graces that yield on earth a foretaste of celestial joys. The true believer acknowledges the Saviour not only as the gracious *High Priest*, by whose atonement and intercession he is rescued from guilt and condemnation; but as the divine *Prophet*, who illuminates the soul with celestial truth; and as the almighty *King*, who establishes in the heart the dominion of righteousness, and who claims the submissive homage of his people.

Behold now, my soul, the exalted characteristics of that faith, which alone is effectual to salvation. Founded on a lively sense of the guilt and condemnation in which, through sin, he is involved, it opens to the true penitent the mercy and grace of the Saviour, and excites him, disclaiming every other dependence, to rely with supreme, lively, and uniform confidence, on the merits and power of Christ, for pardon and salvation. An active and vigorous principle, it renews and purifies the heart; and excites the believer to aim at that universal obedience, by which alone he can glorify his Saviour, and prepare his soul for the fruition of the holy presence of his God.

This supreme, lively, and obedient faith in Christ, O my soul, is made, by the decree of God, thy Almighty Lawgiver and Judge, the indispensable condition of thy salvation. By this exalted principle alone canst thou testify

thy generous sensibility to the infinite glory and love of thy Redeemer, or obtain the inestimable blessings of pardon, peace, and everlasting glory. It is this divine faith which, applying to the soul the Saviour's merits and grace, plucks from her the sting of guilt; bursts the chains of sin; and finally bears the soul triumphant over death, in the robes of celestial righteousness, to the throne of her Redeemer and God.

Blest is thy state, O my soul, glorious thy destiny, if thou art animated by this exalted faith in the Son of God. To the pangs of conscience thou canst apply the pacifying merits of the Saviour's blood. To the phrensy of guilty passion thou canst oppose the conquering energies of his grace. Clad in a panoply of celestial power, thou shalt sustain, unhurt, the assaults of thy spiritual enemies. Death himself shall see his shafts fall harmless at thy feet, and behold thee, contemning his enraged efforts, enter on the felicities of an immortal kingdom. Glorious triumphs of Christian faith! O my soul, aim at obtaining the highest energies of this divine virtue. Cultivate a lively sense of thy degeneracy and guilt. Cherish glowing views of the mercy and power of Christ. Implore the quickening spirit of grace to unite thee to thy Saviour, by a consoling, holy, and triumphant faith. Behold! seated on the throne of mercy erected on the altar, he now waits to bless thee with his love. Opening to the guilty sons of men

the living fountain of salvation, he invites them to "come and drink of the waters of life freely." "Without money and without price," he dispenses the blessings of his grace. Urgently needing his mercy, O my soul, refuse not the solicitations of his love. Weak and humble as thy faith may be, if it has only awakened a conviction of thy need of a Saviour, and a desire to partake of the blessings of his salvation—go—and he who came not "to break the bruised reed," or to reject the desire of the humblest of his children, will encircle thee with the arms of his mercy—will cherish, by his grace, thy feeble faith; until, vigorous and triumphant, it reposes on him, in the fulness of peace, hope, and salvation.

THE PRAYER.

O MOST blessed and glorious Lord God! who, in infinite compassion, hast given thine only Son to be the Saviour of mankind, and art in him reconciling the world unto thyself, not imputing unto us our trespasses and sins; teach me with deep humility and lively gratitude to adore and bless thee for the transcendent display of grace and mercy in the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. May this adorable mystery of love engage my profound contemplations, and my lively affections. May my most fervent desires be excited, my most earnest exertions roused, to obtain the inestimable blessings of this great salvation. Inspire me, O God, with that faith which will unite me to the Redeemer, and be *the pledge of my forgiveness and everlasting re-*

demption. Teach me humbly to adore thy sovereign will, in requiring *faith in thy Son*, as the indispensable condition of thy mercy. Enable me to form profound, just, and lively views of this exalted virtue. May I not rest contented in a nominal acknowledgment of the Saviour; in a speculative and unfruitful belief in his doctrines; or in an indistinct and general view of his character and offices. O teach me, that these external, superficial, and imperfect views of Christ, thy blessed Son, while they dishonour his dignity and glory, will not stand the scrutiny of thy justice, will not convey peace and consolation to my soul, or entitle me to the joys of thy favour. Teach me to lay the foundation of my faith in a deep conviction of my unworthiness and guilt. And when thus awakened and alarmed, O do thou enlighten me to discern the excellence and glory of Christ Jesus; and to apply his precious blood to my consolation and peace. May I discern the all-sufficiency of his merits; the perfection of his righteousness; the fulness of his grace; his ability and willingness to save. May I cordially, joyfully, and steadfastly repose on him as the Almighty Mediator, by whose *righteousness* alone I can be justified; by whose *Spirit* alone sanctified and saved. May my faith purify my heart, raise me above the unhallowed gratifications of the world, and form in my soul the holy graces and virtues which will prepare me for the fruition of thy presence. Thy grace alone, Almighty God, can inspire and perfect my faith,—earnestly I implore thy quickening and sanctifying strength. Lead me humbly and thankfully to that spiritual banquet, where every holy grace of the soul is nourished and strengthened by the body and blood of thy Son. There, O God, may I seal, through faith, my title to thy favour; there may the smiles of thy reconcil-

led countenance be shed upon me; and there may my weak and humble faith be quickened to the holy triumphs of joyful assurance and hope, through the mighty power of that Redeemer, who, as the eternal Son of thy love, liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

THURSDAY EVENING.

MEDITATION.

Faith in Christ as the eternal Son of God, and as a Prophet, a Priest, and King.

THOU dost perceive, O my soul, that faith in Christ consists in such a lively, supreme, and steadfast reliance on his merits and grace, as produces peace of conscience, joy in the favour of God, redemption from the dominion of sin, sincere devotion to the Saviour, universal obedience to his commands. This faith necessarily implies a just and lively view of his glorious character and offices. Until the glories of Christ, and his important offices, are fully displayed to our minds, we shall not discern the all-sufficiency of his merits, his almighty power to save us, his supreme claims to our homage and obedience. Faith, when exercised upon the Saviour in the various offices which he sustains towards us, is a most sublime, ennobling, and consoling principle.

It opens to our astonished contemplations, those eternal glories of the Godhead which were centred in the person of Jesus Christ. It exhibits this Saviour dispensing the luminous revelation of the attributes and will of JEHOVAH; of the duties, hopes, and final destiny of man. It displays him, clothed in the garments of righteousness and mercy, standing before the altar of divine justice, and sending up that costly incense of his blood, which propitiates the holy indignation of an offended God, and invokes for man the blessings of peace and salvation. It displays him, "clad with the garments of vengeance,"—"with zeal as with a cloak," marching triumphant over his adversaries, "treading them down in his anger, and trampling them in his fury,"—and finally ascending, in majesty and power, to the throne of universal dominion; where he rules, the conqueror of death and hell, dispensing to his people the succours of his grace, and receiving their homage and obedience, as the King and Captain of their salvation. When the believer sincerely embraces his Saviour in all these glorious offices, as the eternal Son of the Father, as the illustrious *Prophet* of the Highest, as the atoning *Priest* and *Intercessor* of his people, as the resistless *King* and *Captain of their salvation*—adoration, gratitude, love, and joy, will swell his soul. Every thought, every power, every affection, will celebrate the Saviour's glory. Uniform, sincere, zealous obedience, will attest the sincerity of the ardent

devotion of the believer to his Almighty Lord and King.

From a lively belief in the divine character and glorious offices of the Saviour, thou must derive, O my soul, peace, holiness, and consolation. And this faith should be in holy exercise when thou art to partake of that ordinance, the efficacy of which will depend on thy lively apprehension of that Saviour, whom it sets forth as thy strength and refuge.

Contemplate then the Saviour, with lively faith, as the *eternal Son* of the Father.

The voice of the *prophets*, his forerunners; the declarations of his inspired *apostles* attesting *his own* pretensions; the *exalted offices* which he came to execute; the glorious *triumphs* of his *cross*; the *eternal throne*, on which he governs, and will, finally, judge the world; all proclaim his *divine dignity and glory*, and urge thee, with supreme faith, to adore him as thy *Lord* and thy *God*. Hear the glorious names and titles of divinity conferred by the *prophets* on the Messiah that was to come—"Emanuel, *God* with us—The *Mighty God*—The *Lord* our righteousness—The *Lord* who shall suddenly come to his temple—The *God* whose throne is for ever and ever." Hear the united testimony of the holy *apostles*, who, in declaring that Christ was "God manifest in the flesh," and that in him "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead," only confirm the divine pretensions of *Jesus* himself, "I and the Father *am one*—I am Alpha and Omega, the begin-

ning and the end, the first and the last, which was, and which is, and which is to come, the *Almighty*." The exalted *offices* which he came to execute—to unfold the eternal counsels of the Father—to establish the everlasting rules of truth and duty—to satisfy the claims of divine holiness and justice—to demolish the dominion which sin and death had established over mankind—to open the gates of everlasting bliss which divine wrath had closed against a guilty world—these are offices which a creature, stamped with native weakness could never execute—they require the omnipotent strength of the Creator of the universe—they claim for Jesus, who triumphantly executes them, divine and eternal powers. The *triumphs of his cross*, which bore down the opposing prejudices, learning, and power of the world, and still reduces under its sway the perverse imaginations of the heart, proclaim the divinity of that Jesus who, though he suffered as a malefactor, confers upon the cross, which was the mark of ignominy, these divine powers. View, finally, the glorious *throne* on which he governs, and will, at last, judge the world. What divine splendour surrounds it—How extensive and resistless its dominion—How powerful its decrees—What thunders burst from it, on the impenitent adversaries of God—What immortal felicities are dispensed from it to his obedient subjects—What divine and immortal honours are paid to the glorious Personage who is seated on it, holding "the

keys of hell and death"—"Thousand thousands stand before him, ten thousand times ten thousand minister unto him."—The host of heaven present their eternal adoration to him, who is infinitely exalted above the most perfect of their celestial orders, "the King of kings and Lord of lords." Ah, my soul, these are illustrious proofs that he with whom thou art to confide thy everlasting salvation, is, indeed, thy *Lord* and thy *God*, claiming thy most profound homage, thy unbounded confidence, thy unreserved submission. In every view which faith opens to thee of the Saviour, fix thy contemplations on the *glory* of his *divine nature*. When thou dost repose on the omnipotent arm of a divine Saviour, the emotions of love shall be exalted, the ardours of hope strengthened, the triumphs of thy faith shall rise above all the enemies of thy salvation. What sublime awe surrounds the symbols of the altar, when faith discloses to thee the glories of the incarnate *God*, whom they set forth! Oh! what reverential, yet what delightful emotions swell the bosom of the *believing* communicant, when, in the reception of the sacred elements, he enjoys the exalted assurance, that he is united to a *divine* Saviour—that he is admitted into communion with the *Son of God*—that in the person of that blessed Redeemer, to whom he has committed the salvation of his soul, dwell all those divine attributes which are calculated to invigorate his love, his gratitude, his joy, his holy triumphs.

The lively exercises of faith should be directed to the Saviour as the divine *Prophet*, by whom we are instructed in the laws and counsels of God.

Through him were the beams of truth to be shed on a world enveloped with the shades of error—through him was the benighted mind to be enlightened in that spiritual knowledge which its most exalted researches could never attain. Behold, O my soul, what infinite claims, as thy divine instructor, the Saviour possesses to thy reverence and obedience. He whom thou art to receive as thy Prophet, is himself the *eternal Word*—he was from all eternity in the bosom of the Father—in him dwelt the Holy Spirit without measure. Perfectly acquainted, therefore, must he have been with the will of his Almighty Father. To the prophetic office he was illustriously inaugurated, by the *overshadowing of the Highest, by the descent of the Holy Ghost*, by the solemn declaration of the Father, *this is my beloved Son, hear ye him*. Gloriously does this divine Prophet execute his office. A luminous revelation of divine truth, developing the attributes of the Godhead, the means of access to the throne of offended justice, the universal circle of religious, moral, and social duties, the eternal mansions beyond the grave, did this celestial Prophet promulgate. By stupendous miracles, which proved that his power was from on high, did he enforce his doctrines—by his own splendid example, did he urge his holy precepts—

by the shedding of his precious blood, did he put the seal to the divinity of his mission. Evangelists and apostles he inspired to proclaim his Gospel to the world—in the oracles of the *law* and the testimony, we still behold the divine truths of salvation—through the ministrations and ordinances of the sanctuary, Christ, our Almighty Prophet, still sheds on the soul that enlightening radiance which discloses to her the excellence and consolations of divine truth. Oh! my soul, when the blindness, the depravity of human reason, forced upon thee by thy own experience, and by the view of the world sunk in ignorance and error, awaken the anxious desire to find a refuge from thy perplexing doubts in the bosom of an infallible instructor—embrace, by faith, that holy Jesus who was “*anointed with the Holy Ghost*, and with power,” “to preach good tidings unto the meek,” “to put his laws into the hearts,” and “to write them upon the minds” of the children of men. Bring all thy errors, thy doubts, and prejudices at his feet; humbly implore that guidance which will translate thee from the darkness of natural reason into the light of celestial truth. Let every approach to the holy supper be embraced with ardour, as affording thee an opportunity of renewing the exercises of faith in Christ, thy divine Prophet, and of contemplating with admiration and gratitude the excellencies of that instructor, on whose head rests the radiance of the Godhead, from whose lips flow the ac-

cents of truth. At the altar, where thou dost commemorate the infinite condescension of this divine guide, seal thy vows of bringing every thought into captivity to his obedience, and of embracing, as the subjects of thy daily and reverential meditations, as the standards by which thy opinions are to be formed and thy practice regulated, as the infallible guides by which thou art to be conducted through the mazes of error and sin, to the glorious fulness of eternal truth—the inestimable revelations and laws of that blessed Redeemer, who only is the way, the truth, and the life.

Behold what exalted claims the Saviour possesses to thy lively faith as a gracious *Priest and Intercessor*.

For man sunk under the condemning sentence of a violated law, and obnoxious to divine wrath, he “gave himself an offering, and sacrifice unto God.” “Holy, harmless, undefiled,” shedding over the atonement which he offered, the glories of his divinity, he made “a full, free, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.” Ascending up on high, into the holy of holies, not made with hands, he presents before the altar of divine justice the all-sufficient incense of his merits, and averts from all penitent believers the wrath of an indignant Judge. Seated on the right hand of God, “he ever liveth to make intercession for us”—he implores from his Almighty Father the blessings of pardon, grace, and holiness, which, through him, *descend on his penitent people*.

Infinitely glorious and powerful. O my soul, is the gracious High Priest through whose merits and intercession thou art to be restored to the reconciled countenance of thy offended God. Vested with Almighty power to save those who were the purchase of his blood, in enlivening language he declares the riches of his redemption, and invites the humble and penitent to come and receive the satisfying fulness of his love. I have been crushed in the wine-press by the arm of divine justice. I have drunk the dregs of that cup of trembling into which the Almighty Father, incensed at your presumptuous rebellion, emptied the vials of his wrath. But I was wounded for your transgressions; I was bruised for your iniquities; the chastisement of your peace was upon me; and by my stripes ye are healed. Yes, the sentence of condemnation gone forth against you I have nailed to my cross. My blood has flowed an all-sufficient ransom for the guilty. Sprinkled on the mercy-seat, it ascends as acceptable incense to the Father, and propitiates his justice. By the blood of my cross have I made peace. Crowned for the suffering of death with glory and honour, at the right hand of the Father, I am exalted, the prevailing Intercessor for the guilty sons of men, dispensing pardon to the humble and penitent. Come then unto me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Be not dismayed by the number or enormity of your sins which call for vengeance. All-pow-

erful is the efficacy of my blood. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

O my soul, let the affectionate invitation of thy compassionate High Priest excite thee to place thy supreme confidence in his all-sufficient merits and prevailing intercession. When discerning the inflexible claims of God's justice, and the unspotted rigour of divine holiness, thou dost tremble under the sentence of condemnation which thy sins have merited, look with lively and joyful affiance to that compassionate Saviour who has expiated thy guilt by the merits of his blood. The divine fountain, whence flow the streams of pardon and comfort, is still opened in that ordinance which the Redeemer instituted as the *memorial* of his sufferings, and the *pledge* of thy salvation. There thy compassionate High Priest is waiting to sprinkle thee with that precious blood which will be the pledge of thy deliverance from the stroke of divine justice. Behold! infinite mercy and infinite power surround the Saviour with their glorious effulgence, and invite the fervours of confidence, the triumphs of holy hope. Wretched and guilty, flee to this friend of the wretched, this almighty Saviour of sinners, devoting thyself to his service, rendering him thy homage and trust. Sheltered in his compassionate bosom, *thou* shalt view, undismayed, the storms of wrath ~~that~~ overwhelm the *ungodly*. By the merits

and power of this great High Priest of thy salvation, thou shalt be conducted to the light of the reconciled countenance of thy heavenly Father. The blood of the all-sufficient victim, which still, under a lively symbol, flows on the altar, received by steadfast faith, will allay every doubt and pang which thy guilty fears awakeneth, and pour upon thee unfailing consolations. O thou gracious Saviour, the merciful High Priest, through whom we have access unto the Father, impotent are the highest efforts of the soul to conceive the glories of thy righteousness, the merit of thy intercession. Impotent are our most exalted feelings, to render thee the just tribute of gratitude for that ineffable peace which the healing balm of thy mercy dispenses to the bosom that repes upon thee.

Behold, O my soul, the exalted claims of Jesus to thy homage, thy submission and obedience, as thy *Almighty King*.

He is the eternal King whom God hath "set upon the holy hill of Zion—of the increase of whose government there shall be no end. He is the head of all principality and power. At his divine name every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." By the sovereign power of God was Jesus exalted, in his human nature, to the throne of the universe. "God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion."

“Prince of the kings of the earth,” and head of all the armies of heaven, he hath “on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords,” O my soul, with the homage of lively faith, shouddest thou submit to that glorious King by whose grace alone thou canst be redeemed from the bondage of *sin*, by whose almighty power alone thou canst be rescued from the dominion of *death* and the *grave*.

In vain wilt thou attempt to break the chains of *sin*, unless thy Almighty King exerts the sceptre of his grace. Errors and prejudices cloud thy understanding; sensual appetites and passions debase thy powers; temptation seduces and enthrals thee. Sinking in despair, raise the ardours of holy faith to the glorious King, who, in the accents of animating triumph, invites thee to repose on his almighty arm—I am he who giveth you the victory. The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he hath anointed me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. My grace shall be sufficient for you, my strength shall be made perfect in your weakness. Fear not then, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness. Trust in me for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting strength. O my soul, bow with sub-

missive and holy confidence to the sceptre of thy glorious and invincible Redeemer. He will subdue thy rebellious passions, and introduce the celestial reign of peace and love. Wait upon him with persevering faith, in that ordinance where he dispenses the pledges of his grace, and thou shalt see his salvation displayed in thy redemption from the bondage of sin. Rescued by his grace from the dominion of unholy passions, thou shalt rejoice in the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

O my soul, when thou hast escaped from the dominion of sin, a contest still more formidable awaits thee. *Death*, thy implacable enemy, will seek to crush thee. Whence wilt thou derive the armour that will enable thee to quench his fiery darts, and to bind, under thy victorious feet, this tyrant of the human race? What power will exalt thee to those seats of blessedness which no strength of nature can attain, and which infinitely exceed the merit of thy virtues? Thy *Almighty King*, in majestic power, proclaims himself the glorious Conqueror, under whose banners thou art to be led to victory over death and the grave. I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death. O death, I have been thy plagues; O grave, I have been thy destruction. Fear not then, ye who humbly repose on my omnipotent arm. I will redeem you from death, I will ransom you from the power of the grave. Your corrup-

tion shall put on incorruption, and your mortal immortality. In that glorious kingdom on which I have entered, I have prepared seats for you; and where I am, there ye shall be also. Thy Almighty Saviour and King, O my soul, after having conducted thee triumphantly through the assaults of thy spiritual foes, will not desert thee in that last awful conflict, when death enfolds thee in his embrace. Faith in that Almighty King, whose unseen but powerful arm supports thee, will enable thee to repel the assaults of thy foe.

In the ardours of lively faith and gratitude, O, then, for ever magnify the all-conquering power of the King and Captain of thy salvation. To invigorate thy confidence, and to enliven thy hope, he provides for thee, in his holy supper, pledges of his grace and love. Penetrate, then, through the veil of sense, and in the humble elements of the altar behold, by the eye of faith, the immortal body and blood of thy Redeemer, by which thou art nourished and strengthened to everlasting life. On the altar Jesus erects the throne of resistless dominion, and extends that sceptre which is the pledge of triumph to his followers over the assaults of the powers of darkness. Be it thy habitual care to renew, in the holy eucharist, thy vows of faith in thy divine Redeemer, of subjection to his sovereign sway. His body and blood shall nourish and strengthen thee to everlasting life. Oh! esteem it a glorious privilege which should excite thy most lively

gratitude, that during thy wearisome sojourn in this vale of tears, thou art permitted to refresh thy drooping spirits at the fountain of immortal joys. Ever hasten, with reverent and holy triumph, to that ordinance, where thy glorious King dispenses strength, victory, eternal life. There prepare thyself, by invigorating supplies of grace, for the conflict, which, before the crown of glory rewards thee, thou must sustain with the King of Terrors. And when the pangs of sickness, or the decays of frail nature, proclaim the near approach of thy last enemy, seek, with renewed frequency and fervour, the pledges of thy Redeemer's grace conveyed to thee in his holy supper. Hope, peace, and consolation, shall flow upon thy spirit. The immortal VIATICUM, transfusing divine energy, shall support thee through the darkest shadows of the vale of death. Under the guidance of the Almighty Captain of thy salvation, mounting the everlasting hills, thou shalt reach the city of the living God. In the glorious temple of the celestial Zion, those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, shall "serve God day and night; they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto thee, O holy Jesus. Eternal Son of

the *Father*, who, as our divine *Prophet*, dost instruct and guide us; who, as our gracious *High Priest*, dost intercede for us, and bless us; who, as our *Almighty King*, dost redeem us from the bondage of sin and Satan, and exalt us, victorious over death and the grave, to the immortal glories of thy throne.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast displayed thine infinite wisdom and goodness, in the covenant of mercy which thou hast offered to fallen man; open mine understanding to discern the excellence and glory of this wonderful dispensation of grace; and may my heart be impressed with the emotions of reverence, gratitude, and love. With deep and grateful humility I adore thee, Almighty Father, that thou hast appointed, as the Mediator of this gracious covenant, thy eternal and only-begotten Son, "the brightness of thy glory, and the express image of thy person." I adore thee, that the Redeemer who is to restore fallen man to thy favour, possesses those divine powers and glories which render him at once the object of holy adoration and worship, and of lively gratitude, confidence, and love. Glory be unto thee, O God, for thy unspeakable mercy and grace in Jesus Christ, who, as God, is *mighty to save*—as man, is touched with a *feeling for my infirmities*. O may I humbly and thankfully commit the salvation of my soul to that blessed Jesus, whom thou hast "anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power;" whom thou hast "set forth to be a propitiation for the sins of the world;" whom thou

hast exalted to be "a Prince and a Saviour," to redeem guilty and perishing man. In all his divine, glorious, and consoling offices, may my understanding clearly and fully discern ~~him~~—my soul submissively and triumphantly embrace him.

As the *eternal Son of the Father*, may I bow before him with reverence and homage—may I ascribe unto him glory and dominion—may I magnify the divine fulness of his mercy, and the almighty energies of his grace—may I evermore triumphantly rejoice in the certainty, the all-sufficiency, the everlasting glories of his salvation.

Grant, O God, that embracing by faith the Saviour as my divine *Prophet* and *Instructor*, I may evermore revere the glorious lustre which surrounds him—may implicitly receive his illustrious revelations as the only standard of truth and duty—may study, with devout admiration and gratitude, his hallowed doctrines and precepts—and with humble fidelity and zeal seek to bring all the powers of my soul into obedience to the instruction of this divine Teacher whom *thou hast sent*.

As my gracious and compassionate *Priest* and *Intercessor*, may I gratefully revere and celebrate his mercy and grace—may I apply to his precious blood for pardon and peace—through his mediation and intercession alone, may I seek an access to the throne of thy mercy.

As my Almighty *King*, may I evermore adore his eternal glory, his invincible power—may I humbly submit to the sceptre of his righteous dominion—may I sacredly observe his holy decrees and laws, threats and promises—on his omnipotent arm may I ever place my supreme reliance for victory over my spiritual foes, for redemption from death and the grave.

And, oh! thou holy Jesus, eternal Son of the

...ther, have mercy upon me. "Thou who only
...holy, who only art the Lord, who only art most
...high in the glory of God the Father, grant me thy
peace."

Divine Prophet of the Highest, illumine mine understanding with celestial truth; instruct me in the knowledge and love of the Father; guide me in the way of righteousness and peace.

Gracious and prevailing Priest and Intercessor, sprinkle my guilty soul with the blood of the atonement; and present it pure and spotless before the Father. "By thine unknown and dreadful agonies," by the all-sufficiency of thy atonement, by the mighty power of thy death, by all that thou hast done and all that thou hast suffered, intercede for me and bless me, most compassionate Jesus.

O thou Almighty King, to whom the Father hath given all power in heaven and in earth, stretch out thy omnipotent arm and save me; subdue every thought, desire, and passion that riseth in rebellion against thee; purify my heart by the mighty power of thy grace; "guide and govern both my soul and body in the ways of thy law, and in the works of thy commandments;" in every difficulty and trial, be thou my Almighty Helper and Defender; over all my spiritual enemies enable me to rise triumphant; and finally, O thou omnipotent Saviour, exalt me, sanctified by thy grace, and redeemed by thy power, to the immortal seats of bliss which thou hast prepared for thy people.

Blessed be thy name, O thou most high God, that in Jesus the Mediator thou hast engaged, for my salvation, omnipotent power and infinite love. Blessed be thy name, that thou dost invite me to that sacred banquet, where the illuminating guidance of Jesus the divine Prophet, the all-sufficient

atonement of Jesus the merciful High Priest, the almighty power of Jesus the glorious King, are provided for the instruction, comfort, and salvation of the humble and penitent. Most earnestly imploring thy guidance, confiding in thy mercy, and dedicating myself to thy service, may I repair to thy altar, and there experience that thou art as infinite in compassion as mighty in power, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

FRIDAY MORNING.

MEDITATION.

Thankful remembrance of Christ's Death.

THE devout communicant is called to prepare for participating in the Lord's Supper, by cherishing a *thankful remembrance of the death of Christ*. This sacred ordinance is, indeed, powerfully calculated to impress on the mind the most lively idea of the sufferings of the Redeemer. The period of its institution carries us back to that dark hour, when the blessed Jesus, whose life had exhibited one continued course of beneficence, in the near prospect of an ignominious death, was bestowing on the beloved companions of his sufferings, his mournful blessing, and laying upon them the injunctions of his dying love. It brings to our view, in all its direful horrors,

and in all its affecting glory, the cross; on which, as on an altar, the Saviour was consumed by the fires of divine justice; and on which he poured out his life a sacrifice for the sins of the world. This holy ordinance presents to the view of faith, under forcible symbols, the victim again bound and offered on the altar. The *bread broken* forcibly recalls to our recollection the sacred *body* of the Saviour, which was *bruised for our iniquities* by the arm of divine wrath. And the *wine* which is pressed from the grape, is a lively emblem of that precious *blood* which the burden of our sins forced from the tortured body of the Saviour of the world. O my soul, discern, through these humble but affecting emblems, thy crucified Lord; and, penetrated with the view of his awful agonies, render him the homage of ardent gratitude and love.

The thankful remembrance which thou art called to cherish of the death of thy Redeemer, is not merely a glow of sympathy and sorrow which the view of distress is calculated to excite in every heart. Thou art to contemplate the sufferings of Christ, not as the sufferings of a *common man*, but as the sufferings of a *divine Instructor*; come to proclaim the most important truths to the world, to enforce and seal them by his sufferings and death; and as the sufferings of a *divine Redeemer* who atoned for our sins, and purchased, by his blood, our everlasting redemption.

Consider the sufferings of Christ as a striking seal to the truth of his religion.

Consider his sufferings and death as the all-sufficient expiation for the sins of man.

Finally, consider them as powerfully enforcing the spirit of meekness, patience, and love, the principal characteristics of his disciples.

This view of the sufferings of Christ will tend to excite the emotions of devout admiration, faith, gratitude, and love; and it will also tend to impress on the heart the most important instruction, the most grateful consolation.

Consider the sufferings and death of Christ as a striking *seal* to the religion which he proclaimed.

In the humble and suffering Saviour, whom the altar sets forth, we behold displayed magnanimity, condescension, disinterested love, which call for our devout and grateful admiration, and which tend to excite our full confidence in the divine Instructor, who, by these sufferings, sealed the truth of his mission. He was ushered into the world, not amidst the splendour of courts and palaces, but amidst the inclemencies and the degradation of a manger. He chose for his kindred in the flesh, not the noble, the rich, and the mighty, but the humble, the obscure, the despised. He selected for the companions of his private hours, for the soothers of his cares and sorrows, for the partakers of his labours and in

structions, not the learned, the refined, and the wealthy, but fishermen, humble, illiterate, and contemned. He courted not the cheering company of the gay and the opulent, but the society of the children of poverty, of ignorance and affliction. The Redeemer did not surround himself with the trappings of wealth and power, he did not court the seducing ease of elevated stations, and shun the walks of calamity and distress. Ah! revilings, contempt, insult, repaid all the prodigies of love which distinguished his beneficent life. At the unrighteous judgment-seat of Pilate, this innocent martyr was arraigned. All the insults and tortures which ingenious malice could suggest, were heaped upon that bosom which beat only with ardent love to mankind. On Calvary's mount that innocent blood was poured forth, which pleaded for mercy on the barbarous hands that shed it. O my soul, impotent is language to do even feeble justice to the magnanimity, the love, of the holy Jesus. His *divine dignity and glory* rendered still more astonishing and profound his mercy. The uncreated image of the Father's glory was born the child of poverty and wretchedness. He, who, in heaven, received the adoration of the angelic host, placed himself among the ignorant and profligate herd of publicans and sinners. He, who held in his hand the thunders of Omnipotence, calmly submitted to be the sport of an infuriate rabble. He, whose head divine lustre surrounded, was crowned with

thorns, and mocked with the acclamations of his implacable enemies. The Lord of life and glory, he who created and sustains the world, sunk in the agonies of death, an ignominious victim on the cross. The bitter sufferings which, mitigated and cheered by no friendly sympathy, pursued him, afford the strongest proof that no sinister motives of pride, of interest or ambition, could have swayed his breast. The exalted messages of salvation which he proclaimed, the pure and heavenly precepts which he inculcated, the works of mercy which he performed, did not procure for him affection, gratitude, and love; they did not receive the applauses and honours by which the benefactors of mankind are rewarded. Ah! contumely, insult, and death, crowned his benevolent exertions. O my soul, thy Saviour exhibited, in his *suffering* life, the strongest proof of disinterested zeal, of magnanimous virtue. Persevering in his work of love, though contempt and suffering met him at every step; though he foresaw that the hatred of his enemies would at length prevail in his destruction; and that, amidst their bitter taunts and revilings, he should sustain an ignominious death—thy Redeemer claims thy highest admiration and confidence. Zeal thus self-denyng and disinterested, in the pursuit of the noblest objects, should silence every ungenerous suspicion. Contemplating the divine fortitude and resolution with which the Saviour sealed in death the truth of the doc-

trines which, through his suffering life, he had inculcated, thou shouldest acknowledge, in the holy fervours of a faith like that which animated the Centurion beholding at the cross the magnanimity and patience of the crucified Redeemer—"Truly this was the Son of God."

At the altar, therefore, O my soul, thou art called to commemorate the sufferings and death of a divine Teacher, whose magnanimity, fortitude, and patience, while they claim thy fervent love, gratitude, and homage, are powerfully calculated to confirm and exalt the ardours of thy faith. Contemplate the gross ignorance of all the interesting truths and duties connected with the spiritual welfare, hopes, and destination of man, which enveloped the world before this divine Teacher rose in the splendour of celestial truth and knowledge. Contemplate the impious superstition, the cruel rites, the debasing crimes, which overspread the world before this Son of Righteousness, by the lustre of his beams, chased before him the clouds of idolatry, error, and vice. Then turn thy view to the glorious revelation which Christ promulgated, to the splendid lustre which it sheds on all the duties and all the hopes of man, on every religious and moral truth, which can awaken his desires or his fears, which can conduce to his present or eternal welfare. In the revelation of Jesus Christ, the ardent desires of the soul, seeking the path to duty and bliss which a blind and erring reason in vain endeavoured to discover,

are fully gratified—the way is tracked out, with luminous lustre, to the throne of God—light and glory burst from the mansions of the tomb. O my soul, adore with lively gratitude and faith the divine Teacher who hath sealed to thee these glorious truths and hopes by the testimony of his *blood*. While the tears of lively sympathy and sorrow are shed over the sacred memorials, which recall to thy *remembrance* the unparalleled sufferings of thy blessed Lord, let the altar be also the hallowed throne where thou dost present the grateful vows of obedience to that divine Teacher who, from the terrors and agonies of the cross, sends forth *light, life, and immortality* to the world.

THE PRAYER.

O MOST merciful God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to be our divine guide and teacher, to lead us from the darkness of ignorance and error into the light of thy truth ; grant that the contemplation of his patience, his resolution, his magnanimity and fortitude under the various sufferings which assailed him, while it awakens my lively gratitude, may serve to cherish and confirm my faith in his glorious doctrines. May the ardent, the disinterested, the persevering zeal, which the Saviour displayed in encountering the malicious calumny and persecution with which his relentless enemies repaid him for his benevolent instructions, excite at once my admiration, my gratitude, and steadfast confidence. I bless thee, most holy Jesus, that thou wast not deterred from the prosecution of thy *divine work* of enlightening and restoring fallen

man, by the sufferings and persecutions that assailed thee—by the prospect of the ignominious death which was to close thy infinite labour of love. I bless thee, most holy Jesus, that by the shedding of thy precious blood in attestation of the glorious truths thou didst promulgate, thou hast afforded the highest evidence of thy sincerity, thy disinterested benevolence and zeal. O may I evermore love and serve thee as a divine and beneficent teacher, who, in proclaiming and establishing the glorious revelation of mercy and grace, consulted only our peace, our welfare, our instruction, and everlasting consolation; and generously sacrificed thy own ease, comfort, happiness, and life. O may the commemoration of thy sufferings and death, in thy holy supper, recall to my awakened feelings the infinite condescensions of thy love, the painful sacrifices, the awful conflicts, which thou didst sustain in the establishment of that dispensation of grace, by which thou hast shed the rays of immortal truth and glory on a blind and perishing world. Receiving, with humble gratitude and faith, the *memorials* of thy love, may I resolutely and fervently devote myself to thy service. Evermore following the light of thy divine instructions, and regulating my life by thy celestial doctrines and precepts, may I thus evidence the sincerity of my gratitude, my faith, and love; and seek, in some measure, to make amends to thee for the contumely, scorn, and suffering, with which, while on earth, thy benevolent labours were repaid. O thou eternal light of the world, “send forth thy light and truth. Let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy hill—to God, my exceeding joy,” to the blissful fruition of the excellency and glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

FRIDAY EVENING.

MEDITATION.

Thankful remembrance of the Death of Christ—Charity with all Men.

THOU hast been gratefully contemplating, O my soul, the sufferings and death of Christ, as affording affecting and powerful evidence of the *divinity of his mission* and the *truth of his doctrine*.

Turn now thy view to the sufferings and death of Christ as an *all-sufficient expiation and atonement for sin*.

The sufferings of Christ, considered as the infinite price of the ransom of a guilty world, rise to the highest importance, and claim our profound adoration and love. From the gloom of suffering and sorrow, the virtues of magnanimity, patience, and fortitude, shine forth with the most affecting lustre. Contrasted with the horrors of that hour when, in the agonies of death, aggravated by every painful circumstance of reproach, insult, and ignominy, our *divine Instructor* closed his suffering life; how resplendent and endearing appear the mild and submissive patience, the ardent and benignant love which he displayed. Bursting from the cloud of suffering which envelops the cross, the holy Jesus appears clothed with the *radiance of divine glory*, and with irresistible

authority proclaims to the world the everlasting dispensation of grace, and imposes the immutable rules of truth and duty.

But when, with the authority of a divine *Instructor*, we connect the mercy and power of an almighty *Redeemer*, the sufferings and death of Christ, which before inspired admiration, gratitude, and confidence, will penetrate us with emotions of the most profound adoration, and will excite the liveliest fervours of love, the most ardent triumphs of faith. A Redeemer, who, in sustaining the penalties of sin, rescues us from its awful condemnation; who, in sinking under the stroke of death, breaks the sceptre of the relentless tyrant; who, in yielding for a short period to the dominion of the prince and powers of darkness, bursts the chains which they had cast on guilty man; a Redeemer, who, from the cross which was the ignominious scene of the temporary triumphs of his foes, displays the banners of victory, and "proclaims liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound;" a Redeemer, who thus turns ignominy, suffering, and death, into triumph, victory, and glory, presents a display of divine power, which, while it transcends our feeble comprehensions, should excite the fervours of adoration and love.

Contemplate then, O my soul, the sufferings of Christ, as the price of thy redemption. View thyself as fallen from that rectitude and glory which distinguished thy primeval state,

into the abyss of blindness, depravity, and guilt. Regard thyself as having forfeited the favour of that merciful Being whose favour is the only source of bliss, as obnoxious to the indignation of that Almighty Sovereign, whose frown awakens misery and despair. Ah! when thou art thus abased by the conviction of thy guilt and wretchedness, thou wilt be able to estimate the full value of those unparalleled sufferings by which the Son of God achieved thy rescue. Yes, "while we were yet sinners," in a state of rebellion against the Supreme Majesty of Heaven, of perverse contempt of the goodness of our Almighty Benefactor—while our crimes and impiety called for the arm of divine justice to crush us, the infinite love of God prompted the wonderful purpose of our redemption; and "Christ," the eternal Son, clothed with our nature, "died for us." The poverty, the scorn, the persecution, the ignominy, the agonies of the cross which overwhelmed him, were the punishments due to our sins—they were the price of our redemption. Blessed Jesus, *we* transgressed the righteous laws of our God, and *thou*, innocent and guiltless, didst sustain the penalties due to our crimes. *We* incurred the sentence of divine justice, and *thou*, the immaculate Lamb, didst sink under its avenging curse. *We* were enthralled by the chains of the prince of darkness; *thou* didst sustain the shock of his fiery assaults, to rescue *us* from his dominion. *We* were bowed down,

the captives of death, the tyrant of our race;
thou didst overcome death, and open the gate
of everlasting life.

Oh! profound mystery of love, that calls for the deepest adoration, for unceasing and lively gratitude! O my soul, is it possible for thee to contemplate, without emotion, the agonizing sufferings which the Redeemer sustained, in effecting the glorious purpose of his love—thy redemption from guilt, and misery, and death? The heir of guilt and wretchedness—shall not the sentiments of holy gratitude be excited to the gracious Redeemer, who, by offering himself the victim to divine justice, expiates thy guilt, and consoles thee with the offers of mercy and pardon? Bound by the chains of sin and death, wilt thou not celebrate, in triumphant strains, the grace of that Almighty Conqueror, who, by the shedding of his blood, hath purchased thy redemption from this degrading bondage? Doomed, through transgression, to sustain the opposing cares, the painful changes of this vale of sorrow, and destitute of the consolatory assurance that, beyond the mansions of the grave, a day of rest and peace shall dawn upon thee—Oh! shall not the jubilee of praise be directed to that divine Saviour, who, having passed through the valley of the shadow of death, hath chased from it the spectres that hold in it their reign, and opened to thee a passage to immortal glory?

That thankful remembrance of the death of

Christ, with which it is thy duty always to commemorate his love in the holy supper, will be most strongly cherished by frequently considering the state of condemnation and misery from which the Saviour, by his death, redeemed thee; and the exalted blessings which, through his mediation, are conferred upon thee. Accustomed ever to consider the cross of Christ as the fountain whence flow all thy spiritual hopes and consolations, it will be endeared to thee as the pledge of thy salvation; and at the altar thou wilt fix the eye of grateful faith on the Lamb of God, who, by the sufferings and death there commemorated, hath taken away the sin of the world.

Let the awful exhibition of divine justice in that sacrifice which, under lively symbols, is set forth at the altar, impress thee, O my soul, with a sense of the inflexible indignation of God against the impenitent transgressors of his laws. If God withheld not the sword of his justice, though it penetrated the bosom of his beloved Son, clothed, in the person of man, with the sins of the world, will he spare the impenitent sinner who defies the awful display of justice, and contemns the affecting manifestation of divine mercy which the cross affords?

But if thou art deeply penitent for thy offences, and sincerely disposed to renounce and forsake them, approach the altar; and while thou dost there contemplate the lively memorials of the sufferings and death of thy Lord,

thankfully celebrate the triumphs of his cross by which thy redemption was effected. From the cross, where an all-sufficient victim satisfies the claims of divine justice, beams that mercy which diffuses joy through the troubled spirit. There flows that precious blood which will wash away the stains of sin. In the agonies of the Lord of life, the exactions of divine justice are fulfilled to the uttermost. The righteous Judge of heaven and earth, beholding the authority of his laws, which had been violated, fully vindicated, extends the sceptre of mercy to the penitent offender. Oh! then, my soul, let the altar which conveys to thee the merits and blessings of the cross, ever witness thy humble penitence, thy grateful recollection of that ignominious death, which was the price of thy salvation. And when the *sacred elements*, received by lively faith, convey to thee the strengthening virtue of the body and blood of Christ, let the ardent expressions of gratitude ascend to that God who, on the throne of mercy, is reconciling the world unto himself—to that immaculate Lamb who was slain and offered an all-sufficient victim, to *redeem thee by his blood*.

The grateful contemplation of the sufferings and death of Christ should also impress on thee that *spirit of humility, patience, and universal charity*, which the Saviour eminently displayed, and which are the characteristics of his true disciples.

The sufferings of Christ afford a brilliant

attestation of the truth of his doctrines. They present a still higher claim to our gratitude, and become still more endeared to our grateful remembrance, by their infinite efficacy as *an all-sufficient expiation of our sins and guilt.* And they further demand our grateful recollection, as *impressing* upon us, in the most powerful and affecting manner, the *great and important virtues* which will assimilate us to our divine Master—*humility, patience, and universal love.*

In order to behold a striking exhibition of the meek and lowly spirit of the Christian calling; in order to correct those false ideas of religion, so grateful to corrupt nature, and therefore so generally entertained, which represent its sacred claims as entirely compatible with the gratification of the aspiring, the proud, and the revengeful passions of the heart; in order to contemplate a noble and affecting display of uniform resignation, perfect patience, and exalted love, under afflictions the most severe, injuries the most poignant, and persecutions the most implacable—we must contemplate the character of the blessed Jesus, and follow him through his suffering life. “He grew up as a tender plant and as a root out of the dry ground. He had no form or comeliness; and when we saw him, there was no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was oppressed and he was afflict

ed, yet he opened not his mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. When he was reviled, he reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not." Patient and holy Lamb of God! bitter anguish and misery penetrated thy innocent bosom; and shall we, whose aggravated sins and guilt loudly demand suffering and punishment, expect to pass along the path of pleasure and indulgence? Scorn and persecution, pouring their fires on thy holy head, awakened only thy blessings and thy prayers; and shall we, whom the consciousness of imperfection and guilt should cover with deep humility, cherish a resentful and implacable temper? Sustaining the accumulated sins of a guilty world, thy innocent spirit was pressed down by the arm of divine justice—thou wast stretched on the rack of divine wrath until the agony of thy soul burst forth in great drops of blood. Ah! when thou didst thus exhaust the dregs of that cup of trembling which the indignation of heaven had prepared as the punishment of our guilt, shall we murmur at those slight but salutary afflictions which are mercifully designed to promote our eternal health and perfection?

O my soul, thy patient, meek, and humble Redeemer left thee an example that thou shouldest follow his steps. The virtues of *humility*, *patience*, and *universal love*. he powerfully enforced by his own humble, suffering, and benevolent life. Worthy of thy liveliest grati-

tude is the infinite condescension of thy blessed Lord, who, to animate thy obedience, has performed every precept which he enjoins, has sustained sacrifices and sufferings infinitely greater than those to which thou art called. Behold then exhibited in his life the most glorious model of duty, and the most animating incentives to cherish those lowly, patient, and benevolent virtues which adorned the Saviour's character. Distinguished is the privilege of the disciples of Christ, that they are called to walk in that path of suffering which their divine Redeemer trod before them. Honourable those sorrows which conform the believer to the image of his Lord, and prepare him for the fruition of those glories to which, as the reward of his patience, the Saviour is exalted. Murmur not, O my soul, under that cross with which thy Redeemer did patiently ascend the steep of Calvary. The path of suffering which thy Saviour tracked out thou must patiently follow, if thou wilt attain the celestial glories on which he has entered. It is the declaration which his own lips proclaimed, and which his suffering life has sealed: "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. Through much tribulation ye must enter into the kingdom of heaven." Animated by his glorious example, and cheered by the heavenly voice which, from the throne of eternal power, he directs to thee, "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world"—resolve

to preserve thy allegiance to him amidst the most furious assaults of temptation—resolve to glorify his mercy and power in the most bitter agonies of suffering and death. At the altar, where the affecting representation of the sorrows of thy Lord forcibly reminds thee that those who would resemble him in the glories of his resurrection, must be conformed to him in the likeness of his sufferings and death, thankfully commemorate the animating incentives to patience and resignation which his blessed life affords—and draw from the fountains of his grace the succours which will exalt thee triumphant over the assaults of temptation and sorrow.

The suffering life of the Redeemer is calculated to impress on thee, O my soul, the lowly, the patient, and benevolent virtues which constitute the perfection of thy nature, which are productive of the highest joys and consolations, and which are indispensable qualifications for future blessedness. With the liveliest gratitude, therefore, should those sufferings be remembered, which are fraught with instruction so beneficial and exalted.

There is no virtue, however, which the contemplation of the sufferings and death of Christ more strongly inculcated than *charity* or *universal love*. Love is the soul of his religion; it is the animating spring of every other grace; the eternal centre to which they all tend, and in which they will all finally become absorbed. This virtue, the badge of the true

disciples of Christ, attaches the soul to God, the source of every excellence, the infinite Author of every mercy—in Christ Jesus, the God of everlasting compassion and grace. It inspires the soul with the most lively affection for man, who bears the image of that Divine Being whom she adores—who shares in the common wants and sorrows that oppress her—who is redeemed by the blood of the same Saviour, and sanctified by the same Almighty Spirit—and who looks forward to the same immortal destiny. Christians, animated by the divine principle of love, will uniformly endeavour “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”—to preserve the harmony and order of that holy Church, through which the streams of mercy and grace from the divine Redeemer are conveyed to them, and by which they are to be trained for the immortal celebration of the praises of their God in the Church Triumphant. Regarding one another as partakers of these divine and celestial privileges, as destined for the same transcendent state of perfection and bliss, they will feel themselves united by the most affecting and powerful ties. Yes—resting for pardon on the same precious blood; quickened and sanctified by the same Almighty Spirit; prepared for the inheritance of glory by the same course of suffering and trial; fellow pilgrims through the same vale of tears to a blissful and eternal rest—united thus in the participation of the same wants and sorrows, in the possession of

the same divine privileges, in the fruition of the same glorious promises, Christians should also be united by the holy sentiments of tenderness and kindness. The spirit of divine love, shedding through their hearts its quickening power, should excite them to endeavour to remove or alleviate, by every act of sympathy and affection, the obstacles and afflictions that assail them in their progress—to enliven their wearisome pilgrimage, by celebrating, in holy concord, the glories of that heavenly city towards which they are advancing. Destined to unite in strains of everlasting love before the throne of the Eternal, their spirits should be attuned on earth to the harmonious celebration of the praises of their God. Oh! what an exalted exhibition of joy and peace would the world present, did this spirit of divine love pervade the souls of Christians! This vale of tears and misery, where discord, suspicion, envy, and revenge, blast the few joys which lie scattered along the path of life, would be converted into a paradise of love and peace, fair and exalted as that in which man enjoyed the presence of his Maker.

This spirit of *universal charity*, so sublime and noble in its origin and nature, so beneficial and exalted in its effects, is enjoined on thee, O my soul, by the most powerful and affecting considerations; and it is an indispensable qualification for that holy supper, where Christians profess themselves to be

connected by the holy ties of a Redeemer's merits and blood. From the altar, the tender voice of the Saviour implores his followers, by that precious blood which is their common and supreme affiance, by that quickening spirit of love and consolation which he sheds through their hearts, by those blissful and immortal hopes which he hath purchased for them all, by that infinite and unutterable love which, through his suffering life and agonizing death, he displayed for them, he implores them to "love one another." "This is my commandment, that ye love one another." Blessed Jesus! who shrunk from no sufferings to achieve our redemption, we owe thee the supreme devotion of our souls, which thou hast purchased. And didst thou require, as the pledge of our gratitude, the renunciation of our ease and enjoyment, cheerfully should the inadequate tribute be rendered. Base then, and highly criminal the apathy which would lead us to disobey thy dying injunction, to cherish the virtue of charity and love, the ornament of our nature, the source of the purest joys.

Advance then to the altar, O my soul, cherishing the emotions of *lively benevolence for all mankind*. Embrace in thy benevolent regard the whole human race. Resolve to promote by ardent and persevering exertion the welfare of thy fellow men. The disciple of a Redeemer who went about doing good, let no opportunity be omitted of imitating thy

blessed Lord in acts of mercy. Following the steps of thy compassionate Master, visit the abodes of poverty and wretchedness; and while thy beneficence pours gladness into the hearts of the children of sorrow, direct their trust and hope to that gracious Providence, "without whose knowledge not even a sparrow falleth to the ground"—direct their desires to those abodes of undecaying peace, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest." The blessing of those who were ready to perish shall descend upon thee. Animated by that spirit of divine love which assimilates thee to thy blessed Redeemer, he will acknowledge thee, at his holy supper, as an acceptable guest. And when from the fountain of grace and mercy opened on the altar, the streams of peace and joy are dispensed to thee, let thy earnest supplications be directed to heaven, that the bread of life may diffuse its efficacy throughout the earth; that all the guilty sons of men may have access to that blood, which washes away the stains of sin.

Advance to the altar, animated with peculiar affection for those who, as *Christians*, are connected with thee by the endearing *ties of the Redeemer's merits and grace*.

For those who are of the "household of faith," who, admitted into the Christian covenant, place their hopes of salvation on the merits and grace of that Redeemer who is thy only trust and refuge, the most lively

emotions of affection should be cherished. The sincere followers of Christ are connected together by the sacred ties of a Saviour's love, of his almighty grace renewing and animating their souls. These ties are destined to be as exalted and eternal as those celestial exercises which will engage the spirits of the blest, before the throne of God, in the unceasing strains of adoration and praise. Look upon those then, O my soul, who, united with thee to the Redeemer by a living faith, commemorate, at the altar, the rich displays of his grace and mercy, as thy destined companions in that celebration of redeeming love, which, through eternal ages, will constitute the glory and the bliss of the Church Triumphant. Oh! let the exalted consideration that the bands of Christian fellowship shall never be dissolved, excite thy warmest affection for those with whom thou art destined to drink ineffable bliss at those streams which flow for ever in the city of the living God. Let the precious emblems of the Saviour's love, which, with his humble followers, thou dost receive at his holy supper, bind thee to them by the cords of affection, which no ungenerous selfishness or envy, no unkind suspicions or resentments shall ever tarnish or dissolve. Over the lively *memorials* of that infinite grace to which they are indebted for those immortal hopes which alone cheer the wearisome pilgrimage of life, let the members of Christ's mystical body vow to each other sacred fellowship and affection—let them re-

solve “to put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, with all malice—and to be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven them.”

And as the perfection and consummation of Christian charity, the devout communicant should advance to the altar, *heartily disposed to forgive and to love his enemies.*

It was the pressing injunction of our dying Master; it is made the condition of our receiving forgiveness at the hands of our Almighty Judge; it is constituted by our Lord the sacred plea by which we are to supplicate forgiveness from heaven, that we *forgive others their trespasses against us.* The forgiveness of our enemies consists in exercising towards them those benevolent affections which, by the constitution of human nature, and the command of God, we are bound to exercise towards all mankind; in the ready *expression* of our good will to them; in refraining from every act of unkindness or resentment towards them; and in a cordial desire and disposition to effect a reconciliation with them. As it is one of the most difficult virtues, so it is one of the most noble and exalted—in the highest degree perfective of human nature, and fruitful of the highest joys. It rescues us from those painful anxieties which agitate the breast that is the seat of gloomy revenge. It sheds that delightful tranquillity which is alone the portion of the bosom that is at peace with the

world. It animates the soul with the elevated reflection, that in overcoming the passion of revenge, she has gained the most sublime victory. It assimilates man to that gracious and merciful Being, who doeth good to the unthankful and the evil. It advances him into resemblance to that divine Saviour, who, in the ardours of infinite love, supplicated pardon for the enemies who hunted him to the cross. The devout communicant, whose heart is penetrated with the display of mercy which the cross affords, will bury at the foot of the altar all his enmities, jealousies, and resentments. The blood of his Saviour shed through his heart will extinguish every wrathful passion. Love to God and man, ardent, holy, and constant as the fire of the eternal altar at which it is kindled, will alone animate his soul.

AN ACT OF THANKSGIVING

FOR THE

HUMILIATION AND SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

Praises evermore be unto thee, O eternal Son of God, who didst take our nature upon thee, and for us didst become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

That when, by rebellion against our Sovereign God and merciful Father, we had fallen from our state of primeval rectitude and glory, had forfeited

all title to the light of God's countenance, and incurred his indignation and wrath—that when justice urged our excision, and divine holiness demanded the vindication of a violated law—that when among the host of heaven “there was none to help;” among the innumerable orders of created beings “there was none to uphold,” none whose “arm could bring salvation” for us—that in this our hopeless state of condemnation and misery, when the mercy of the Almighty Father prompted, thou didst willingly undertake the office of our Redeemer;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O eternal Son of God.

That thou, who “wast with the Father before the world was,” “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person”—thou, whom cherubim and seraphim adored, and to whom the host of heaven bowed submissive—didst condescend to veil thy glory in our miserable nature;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O eternal Son of God.

That thou didst relinquish the felicity of the Godhead, to be born in our nature, of an humble and obscure family; to be ushered into the world among the beasts of the stall; and to sustain the wants and pains of infancy and childhood—when thou couldst have commanded the homage of the universe, and encircled thyself with celestial majesty and splendour;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, eternal Son of God.

That thou, whom angels and archangels counted it their glory to serve, didst thyself become subject to thy parents, rendering them reverence and obedience; and through the whole of thy benevolent life didst become the servant of mankind, in administering to their necessities;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, eternal Son of God.

That in the prosecution of the benevolent work of our redemption, thou didst sustain want, and suffering, and sorrow ; and didst even wander without a place to lay thy head,—when thou wast entitled to the eternal throne of universal dominion ;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, eternal Son of God.

That thou didst encounter shame, indignity, and insult ; didst associate with the refuse of mankind ; and patiently didst submit to the charge of acting in concert with the prince and powers of darkness—when thou couldst have commanded, for thy attendants, the brightest seraphs that minister in the court of heaven ;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, eternal Son of God.

That in the day of thy humiliation, as a suffering Saviour, thou didst become “ a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ;” that, laden with the sins of a guilty world, thou didst appear “ without form or comeliness,” “ thy visage marred more than any man, and thy form more than the sons of men”—that in the garden of Gethsemane thou didst, friendless and alone, “ tread the wine-press” of thy Father’s wrath, and “ drink the dregs of that cup of trembling” which infused direful horrors through thy soul, and bathed thy convulsed body in a bloody sweat ;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, eternal Son of God.

That thou didst submit to be betrayed by one of thy disciples, and “ led as a lamb to the slaughter” by thy implacable enemies ; that, deserted by thy timid and faithless followers, thou didst patiently submit, in the hall of the high priest, and at the tribunal of Pilate, to be unjustly arraigned and condemned, to be buffeted and spit upon, scourged and

mocked—when thy omnipotent word could have struck to the earth thy vengeful adversaries ;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, eternal Son of God.

That thou didst patiently labour under the load of the ignominious cross on which thou wast to suffer—and, condemned as a malefactor, didst, amidst the cruel taunts of thy enemies, sustain the agonies of death, made more dreadful to thy spirit by the wrath of thy Father ;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, eternal Son of God.

That for us men, and for our salvation, these painful sufferings, this ignominious and cruel death were patiently sustained—that thou wast “wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, that the chastisement of our peace was upon thee, and that by thy stripes we are healed ;”

Praises evermore be unto thee, O most Holy Jesus, eternal Son of God.

That by thy sufferings and death thou hast sealed the truth of thy doctrines, and exhibited a bright and affecting example of those graces of humility, meekness, and love, which thou dost call us to practise ; that by thy suffering life and agonizing death, thou hast powerfully enforced thy instructions, rendered an all-sufficient atonement for sin, and shed divine lustre on that path of humble and holy obedience by which we are to ascend to the glorious bliss of thy eternal kingdom ;

Praises evermore be unto thee, O eternal Son of God, who didst take our nature upon thee, and for us didst become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

• THE PRAYER.

“ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast given thine only Son to be both a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life; give me grace that I may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour myself to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life.” O most blessed and merciful Jesus, eternal Son of God, who didst suffer for iniquities not thine own, and by the shedding of thy most precious blood didst pay the infinite price of our redemption; may the contemplation of thy bitter sufferings excite in my heart the emotions of lively gratitude to thee, my gracious Redeemer, who couldst stoop from the glory and felicity of the Godhead, and encounter shame, sorrow, persecution, and death, to achieve my deliverance and salvation. Contemplating, with frequent and holy admiration thy infinite condescension and love, may I regard no sacrifices too dear, no service too exalted to testify my sensibility and gratitude. Let me not incur the awful guilt of contemning the affecting motives to repentance exhibited by thy precious blood, shed to atone for my sins. Beholding, in the agonies of thy cross, both the fearful display of the justice of God, and the attractive lustre of his infinite mercy, may the emotions of holy apprehension and love unite to excite in my heart the resolution of serving thee. O let me not sink under the condemnation of having contemned thy bitter agonies, of having trampled thee under foot, of having put thee to an open shame, of having crucified thee afresh, by my transgressions. Over the emblems of thy sufferings, displayed on the altar, may I resolve to renounce all my sins; and may I offer thee a heart penetrated with the emotions of contrition, grati-

tude, and love. And O thou compassionate Redeemer, in whose suffering life the virtues of humility, patience, and divine charity shone forth with the most exalted lustre—may the example thou hast set me be the subject of my constant and devout meditations; and warmed with the glorious view, may I resolve to imitate thy divine humility, patience, and love. May the contemplation of thy cross, on which, in the agonies of death, thou didst pour forth the earnest prayer for pardon on thy relentless enemies, disarm in my soul every purpose of resentment, and quicken the emotions of forgiveness and kindness. Eternal Spirit! fountain of divine love! shed abroad in my heart that sacred charity for all mankind, that tender affection and sympathy for the members of Christ's mystical body, by which I shall be conformed to the likeness of my blessed Redeemer, and made meet for his eternal kingdom of peace and joy. Holy Spirit! when I approach that banquet, where Christians commemorate their Saviour's mercy, and testify that they are partakers of the same blessed privileges and hopes, may thy grace subdue every resentful and angry passion, and enkindle the flame of divine charity. May my soul embrace in its ardent affection the holy company of the redeemed, who meet at the altar to celebrate the immortal triumphs and blessings of their Saviour's mercy. May thy grace unite me to them in the bands of sympathy and friendship, and excite me uniformly to exercise towards them the virtues of gentleness, forbearance, and love. Thus, O my Saviour, by fulfilling that law of celestial kindness which thou didst so earnestly and repeatedly enjoin, may I exhibit to the world the engaging lustre of thy blessed religion. Thus cherishing the spirit of divine love in the exercise of forbearance and forgiveness, may I ever be

acknowledged by thee as an acceptable guest at thy holy table ; and finally be admitted to the celestial supper of the Lamb ; to the participation of the everlasting festival of love in thy heavenly kingdom ; to the hallowed chorus of angels and arch-angels, and the spirits of the just, celebrating in unceasing strains the majesty and glory of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SATURDAY MORNING.

MEDITATION.

The devout participation of the Ordinances of the Church, the appointed method of Salvation.

No truth can be more evident to reason, than that God has a right to prescribe what method he pleases for the salvation of mankind. Dependent upon him as their Creator and their Judge, deriving from him life and all its enjoyments, which they hold by the dependent tenure of his sovereign will, they are bound by every tie of duty, interest, and gratitude, implicitly to fulfil his injunctions. By obedience to his commands, they acknowledge his supreme authority over them, and attain that perfection and happiness for which they were destined. By resistance to his will, they forfeit that purity and bliss, which are only to be found in the enjoyment of his favour. When *we further* consider man as a fallen creature,

subject to the punishment of his offended Judge, we shall be compelled to acknowledge, that he can have no hope of forgiveness but on those terms and conditions which God may prescribe. If, then, God hath seen fit to dispense his mercy and grace through the ordinances of a church, by communion with which guilty and condemned man is to be restored to virtue and happiness—who is he that will resist his will? To dispute the propriety of his institutions, to doubt the efficacy of the means which he hath established, would be a presumptuous contempt of his mercy and power, a wilful rejection of his proffered grace. Contemning the means which he hath instituted for our salvation, we should aggravate to the deepest dye the guilt of rebellion against our almighty Sovereign and Judge; and without any plea to extenuate our guilt, we should sink under the avenging arm of his justice.

That in order to our deliverance from the condemnation and wrath which our sins have incurred, and to our restoration to the favour of God, we must humbly and devoutly participate of the ordinances of the church, is a truth, therefore, which rests on the simple fact, that God hath instituted these ordinances as the means of salvation, the channels of mercy and grace.

To be fully satisfied of this fact, and to be rightly informed in the necessity, the nature, and efficacy of the ordinances of the church, deeply concerns us. Our eternal happiness

depends on our submission to the means and conditions of salvation which God hath prescribed. And the ordinances of the church will appear unnecessary and useless; they will exhibit no claim to our reverence, attention, or obedience, unless we regard them as instituted by God himself, and accompanied, when duly administered and received, by his grace and mercy.

It must be evident, therefore, that a deep conviction of the necessity and inestimable benefits of the ordinances of the church is necessary to an humble and enlightened participation of them. It will, therefore, be highly useful and proper, that the Christian who is engaged in preparing for the reception of the holy eucharist, the most sublime act of Christian worship, should be impressed with the important truth, that the ordinances of the church are appointed by God, and that they are the instituted pledges of his mercy and grace. He should be deeply impressed with the important truth, that by the devout participation of them, we preserve our communion with the church, for which the Redeemer shed his blood, and thus become entitled to the blessings of that covenant of mercy which God hath promulgated to a guilty world. When we firmly believe that the power of God accompanies the due administration of his ordinances; that through them, in the exercise of faith, we become united to the Redeemer, and interested in his atonement and grace;

the devout participation of the holy eucharist will appear necessary to our salvation. Its high and awful import, as a channel of divine mercy and grace, impressed upon our minds, will tend to quicken and exalt our reverence, our penitence, our faith, our gratitude and love. Turn then, O my soul, to the consideration of the humble, but, through the grace and blessing of God, powerful *means* which he hath instituted for thy salvation!

That the truths of religion should be commemorated, and its blessings conveyed by external rites, is perfectly agreeable to the nature of man. His senses are the principal inlets of his knowledge, and through them the most lively and permanent impressions are made on his mind. There is no truth which the consideration of human nature, and the testimony of daily experience, more strongly establish, than that man is swayed more by his *passions* than by his *reason*. By the impressive power of external rites and emblems you gain access to his passions; you awaken, you guide and control them. So great is the influence of external rites on the mind, that men in all ages have had recourse to them to perpetuate the memory of signal achievements, and to excite and preserve the sentiments of religion. The nature of man, therefore, required that the important truths of religion should be impressed on the mind by external emblems and rites. By these figurative institutions, spiritual and abstract truths, which are

so difficult of apprehension, are clearly conveyed; the understanding is enlightened; the imagination and the feelings, those powerful springs of human action, are roused. Ordinances and rites, instituted by God himself, as memorials of those exalted displays of mercy by which our redemption was effected, powerfully tend to confirm our faith, to enliven our gratitude, to cherish our love. They keep up the lively remembrance of the wonderful mercy and grace of God, and exhibit, in the most impressive manner, the glorious achievements by which our Redeemer subdued the adversaries of our salvation.

Wonder not then, O my soul, that the infinitely wise Creator of the universe should condescend, in all its dispensations to the world, to consult the nature of man, and to institute ordinances as *memorials* of his love, and *channels* of his mercy and grace. Even in that state of primitive perfection, where the ever-blessed Jehovah vouchsafed to hold immediate converse with the favoured parents of our race, figurative emblems were instituted to remind them of their duty, to convey and recall to them their glorious privileges and hopes. The tree of the *knowledge of good and evil* constantly reminded them of the obligation of obedience to the sovereign Author of their being, and of all their mercies; and powerfully impressed on their remembrance the awful penalty of contemning the commands of their almighty Lawgiver and Judge. The *tree of life*, to which

they had constant access, was the seal and pledge of that immortality which was to be the glorious reward of their obedience. After the fall had involved them in the curse of transgression, had stripped them of their purity and glory, and rendered them obnoxious to the wrath of God, the hope of mercy was lighted up in their minds by the institution of *sacrifices*, which their offended God made the channels to his favours. While the shedding of the blood of beasts on the altar awakened in the soul of fallen man the recollection of his guilt, which required expiation, it carried forward his joyful view to the promised victim, the infinite efficacy of whose blood would wash away the stain of sin. When, in the further unfolding of that plan of redemption which was to be finally consummated in the glorious promulgation of the Gospel, God chose a particular family and nation to be the repositories of his will, and the heirs of his promises; the rite of *circumcision* was instituted, to be both a lively memorial of duty and a pledge of the Divine favour. Take a view of the *Jewish* law, and you will find that its numerous, significant, and splendid *rites*, were the instituted means by which the people of Israel maintained their communion with God; gratefully commemorated the deliverance which his almighty arm wrought for them, and laid their claim to his blessing and everlasting favour.

When he, the glorious seed of the woman, whose promised appearance kindled the first

gleam of hope which illumined the souls of the wretched parents of our race after their rebellion against God—he, whose joyful day the fathers beheld and were glad—when he, to whom all the prophets and the law bore witness, appeared to complete the work of redemption, by the shedding of his blood; the same plan of Divine Providence which had distinguished the preceding dispensations was still preserved. Through the channel of *rites* and *ordinances* were the mercy and grace of God to be conveyed; by them were the glorious achievements to be commemorated by which our redemption was effected. A *church* was instituted, which was to be the repository of the laws, of the mercy and grace of God. Destined to be everlasting in its duration, it was the promise of the Divine Founder of the church, that the gates of hell should not prevail against it. Officers were appointed to rule it; to administer its ordinances; to conduct its worship; to enact its laws; to execute its discipline—and with them, successively deriving their power from him, the Redeemer promised to be “always, even to the end of the world.”

Into this church, the “body,” which derives life, strength, and salvation from Christ its head, *baptism* was instituted as the sacred rite of admission. In this regenerating ordinance, fallen man is born again from a state of condemnation into a state of grace; he obtains a title to the presence of the Holy Spirit, to the

forgiveness of sins, to all those precious and immortal blessings which the blood of Christ purchased. The humble Christian, who, by actual repentance, by lively faith, and holy obedience, fulfils his baptismal engagements, is invested in the rite of *confirmation* with all those spiritual blessings which baptism conditionally conferred, with the manifold and strengthening aids of the Holy Ghost, (Acts viii. 17.) In the *worship* of the sanctuary, he maintains that intercourse with heaven, by which his faith is confirmed, his love quickened, his resolutions of obedience strengthened, his soul prepared for the blissful services of the church and temple of God eternal in the heavens. By that powerful grace which accompanies the *preaching of the word*, the terrors of the law are impressed on the hearts of the careless; the promises of mercy applied to the trembling conscience of the penitent; divine light, consolation, and triumph poured upon the path which conducts the Christian to immortal glory. In that most sublime ordinance, the *holy eucharist*, are centred all the blessings of the Redeemer's mercy, and the almighty energies of his grace and love. In the participation of it, the devout believer offers unto God the acceptable sacrifice of thanksgiving for the infinite mercies of redemption. He becomes united to his Saviour in the bonds of the everlasting covenant. The pardon of his sins, the renovating and consoling guidance of divine grace, the love and favour of his re-

conciled Father and God, a title to immortal felicity, are conveyed and sealed to him by the body and blood of Christ, of which, under lively emblems, he partakes.

Behold then, O my soul, the same glorious plan distinguishing all the divine dispensations. It hath pleased the Sovereign Lord of the universe uniformly to dispense his mercy and grace through the channel of *ordinances and rites*, instituted as the *means* and *pledges* of salvation. Humble and insignificant to the eye of sense, to the proud and presumptuous mind, may appear the rites which Jehovah makes the pledges of his mercy, the means of redemption to his fallen creatures. But faith will discern in them the power of the most high God, whose ways are not as our ways; who, both in *nature* and in *grace*, accomplishes the most stupendous objects by the most humble instruments; and who more illustriously magnifies his power and confounds the pride of man, in proportion to the weakness and imperfection of the agents, who effect the purposes of his sovereign will.

The holy sacraments of the church advance our salvation, not only by their natural tendency to cherish faith, gratitude, penitence, love, and every other divine virtue, but by the refreshing *grace* and *mercy* which they convey to those who receive them worthily. They are not merely lively and affecting *memorials*, calculated to impress on the mind the interesting truths of redemption, and to display, by

significant emblems, the glories and triumphs of redeeming love. But they are instituted by God, as *pledges* of his grace and mercy; as channels to convey to degenerate man spiritual blessings and privileges, ordinarily to be obtained in no other way. The sprinkling of the body with water is a significant emblem of the spiritual purification which we must undergo. Bread broken, and wine poured out, may be considered as lively symbols of the sufferings and death of the Saviour, in remembrance of whom we eat the bread and drink the wine. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, considered in this single point of view, as memorials or emblems of the most interesting spiritual truths, are calculated to produce the most important instruction and consolation. But their value and importance rise beyond all comparison, when we regard them further as the instituted *means* and *pledges* of all the blessings of salvation. Wherever the Gospel is promulgated, the sacrament of *baptism* is the mode through which we must be admitted into covenant with God, and by which we must obtain a title to those blessings and privileges which Christ has purchased for his mystical body, the church: the participation of the body and blood of Christ in the *holy eucharist*, is the mode by which we must become interested in the merits of the Saviour's death and passion, by which the guilt of sin must be removed, and its power subdued in our hearts; by which our perish-

ing natures must derive the blessing of immortal glory. The holy sacraments are the instituted means by which God conveys to the penitent and faithful those spiritual and immortal blessings, for which repentance, faith, and obedience, are necessary qualifications. "Repent and be *baptized* for the remission of sins." "Except ye *eat* the *flesh* of the Son of man, and *drink* his *blood*, ye have no life in you." We must sincerely repent of our sins; we must heartily believe the Gospel; we must walk in the paths of holy obedience; we must also enter into covenant with God by baptism; and ratifying our vows of allegiance and duty at the holy sacrament of the supper, commemorate the meritorious sacrifice of Christ. The sacraments are the *means* by which we *receive* the inestimable blessings of redemption—the *pledges* by which they are *assured* to us.

THE PRAYER.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who in thy wise providence hast appointed *ordinances* to be the memorials of thy love, and the pledges and channels of thy grace and mercy to a fallen world, teach me humbly to adore thy sovereign will, and reverently to submit to thy institutions. Ever cherishing a profound sense of thy almighty power, and of my own weakness, guilt, and dependence, may I repress the arrogance which would lead me to arraign thy dispensations, or to neglect and condemn the instituted means of grace. Thy infinite condescension and

goodness, O God, in setting forth and conveying, by ordinances and rites, the blessings of salvation, demand my ~~sincere~~ and lively gratitude. May I devoutly magnify thy name, that, by lively symbols addressing and engaging my senses, thou dost powerfully impress on my understanding the awful and affecting mysteries of my redemption, and dost awaken the affections of my soul in thy love and service. Ever mindful that thy almighty power can give efficacy to the most humble instruments, may I discern, by the eye of faith, under the *outward and visible signs* of thy holy sacraments, the *inward and spiritual grace* which they signify and are designed to convey. Save me, O God, from the guilt and presumption of endeavouring to separate what thou hast inviolably connected; of presuming to claim thy grace and mercy, while I neglect or condemn the *means* and *pledges* by which they are conveyed and assured to me. To the holy sacraments and ordinances of thy church may I ever have recourse, as the divine seals by which thy mercy is conveyed to my soul—the channels by which quickening, purifying, and refreshing streams flow from the fountain of thy grace. And while I thus reverence thy holy ordinances, and by steadfastly and constantly partaking of them, keep up my communion with thee, my God, may I ever remember that their inestimable blessings are fully conveyed only to the humble, the penitent, and the faithful. Teach me, therefore, O God, sedulously to cherish those virtues of humility, of penitence, and of faith, by which alone I can be a worthy partaker of thy holy sacraments, and expect to receive in them the communications of thy grace and love. O be thou pleased ever to guide and aid me in my preparation for thy holy ordinances. Let thy preventing grace quicken my penitence, confirm my faith, and awaken my

gratitude and love; that thus partaking of thy ordinances under a lively sense of my unworthiness, and with earnest desires for thy ~~grace~~ and mercy, they may seal to my soul the blessings of redemption, and reinstate me in thy everlasting love and favour. Hear me in these my humble supplications, O merciful God, and grant that the ordinances of thy church establishing in my soul celestial graces and virtues, may prepare me for admission into thy heavenly kingdom, where my soul shall drink at the fountain of immortal pleasure, and be satisfied with the fulness of glory and bliss, through Jesus Christ my Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

MEDITATION.

The mode by which authority to administer the Sacraments is to be derived from Christ, the Divine Head of the Church.

CONSIDERING the sacraments as *means* and *pledges* of divine grace and mercy, it must be evident that their efficacy depends not on any *inherent virtue*, but on the *power of God* which accompanies them. Hence results the important truth, that in order to be effectual, to be acknowledged by God, and accompanied by his power, they must be administered by those who have received a commission for the purpose from him. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to ascertain with whom God has vested authority to administer those sacraments which derive all their efficacy from being administered according to his appointment.

The Son of God, as the Redeemer of mankind, was constituted by his Almighty Father

the "Head of the church." To him, as the King and Ruler of this spiritual kingdom, "all power was given in heaven and in earth." From him, therefore, must emanate all authority in the church. The fanatic or enthusiast, who, invading any of the ministerial functions, pretends that he has received *immediately* from God a divine commission, cannot claim the confidence of mankind, unless, like the apostles, he proves, by the exercise of *miraculous power*, that God is indeed with him. Every claim to the ministerial function, in the present day, founded on an *immediate* commission from God, must be rejected as false and impious. There remains, therefore, no way in which spiritual authority can be derived from the divine Head of the church, but through the agency of a set of men originally deriving their authority from Christ, and successively transmitting "it to the end of the world."

In inquiring concerning the constitution of the *Christian* ministry, we would certainly be authorized in supposing, that in its orders it would resemble the *Jewish* priesthood. The Christian dispensation was only the glorious development and consummation of that divine system of grace and mercy, the outlines of which had been traced in the types and shadows of the Jewish ritual. As the types and shadows of the law were not abolished, but all gloriously fulfilled in the Saviour, and in the ordinances of his spiritual kingdom, the presumption surely is not unwarrantable, that

as the Jewish priesthood subsisted under the three orders of high priests, priests, and levites, so the Christian ministry would be constituted under three orders resembling these. Accordingly, the notion was prevalent among the primitive fathers, that the orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, in the Christian church, were instituted in conformity to the three orders of the priesthood in the Jewish church.

That Christ transferred all spiritual power in the church to the apostles, is evident from the commission which he gave them. "As my Father sent me, even so send I you." The Father sent him, the *Prophet*, the *Priest*, and *Ruler* of the church. The apostles, therefore, were commissioned to be the *prophets*, the *priests*, and the *governors* of the church.

That this commission was not temporary, and to die with the apostles; but, on the contrary, was to be perpetuated in the church, is evident from the concluding words of the commission: "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." The apostles and their successors, therefore, were commissioned to promulgate the terms of salvation, to teach and enforce its doctrines and duties. They were also commissioned to intercede for and bless the people, and to present in the holy eucharist the commemorative sacrifice of the death of Christ. They were further commissioned to govern the church, to admit into and to exclude from its communion, to enact its laws, and to administer its discipline. And

this authority was to be transmitted in the church "always, even to the end of the world."

Whether the priesthood vested with these high and spiritual powers was to subsist under only *one order*, or under *several orders*, with powers in some respects *distinct* and *appropriate*, is a question which the *practice* of the *apostles*, who were appointed by Christ to constitute the church, must determine. That the apostles ordained *elders* and *deacons* in the different churches, and vested them with certain ministerial powers, will readily be admitted. And that there was an order constituted superior to these, with the *exclusive* power of *ordaining* to the ministry, is a fact equally undeniable. In Ephesus certainly, and most probably in Crete, *elders* were at an early period appointed, (Acts xx.17, 28.) Afterwards Paul commissioned Timothy and Titus, and sent them to those places, for the express purpose of *ordaining* elders in every city, (1 Tim. v. 22. Titus i. 5.) Was not this commission an absurd and useless one, if the *elders* in those places possessed the power of *ordination*? Even allowing that the *concurrence* of the elders was necessary in ordaining to the ministry, and governing the church, the commission given to Timothy and Titus certainly proves that the *supreme* power was vested in them; and that without them power in the church could not be legitimately exercised. That the priesthood, therefore, was constituted under three orders; and that to the first order belonged

the power of ordaining to the ministry, and of thus perpetuating the priesthood through all ages of the church, are facts established by the testimony of Scripture. That these orders are not *now* distinguished by the same *names* by which they were designated during the age of the apostles; that the name of *bishop*, now applied to the *first* order, is frequently, in the sacred writings, applied to the *second* order, are points unworthy of a moment's attention in this important inquiry. By the clear evidence of Scripture *fact*, the division of the Christian ministry into *three* orders; the appropriation of the power of *ordination* to the first order, thus constituted the only legitimate channel of conveying the divine commission necessary to the exercise of the ministry, may be satisfactorily proved. The changes which may have taken place in the *names* by which these orders have been designated, cannot affect the distinction of *office* and *power* among them.

But if it should be conceived, that the Scripture testimony on this important subject is in any respect dubious, where may we seek for satisfactory light and information? Certainly in the faith and practice of the *primitive church*. These, unquestionably, afford the clearest and best light by which to elucidate and establish the meaning of Scripture in parts which admit of doubt and controversy. Founded, as the primitive church was, by the inspired *apostles*; and having accep~~t~~^t, as its venerable

fathers had, to the source of divine truth and knowledge; it is scarcely possible that we can err, if we take its universal faith and usage as the standard by which to interpret the sacred writings. To trust, indeed, to the *single* testimony of any one father of the church, or to embrace his speculative *opinions* or interpretations of Scripture, would be indiscreetly to take as our guides, imperfect and fallible men. But though liable to error in judgment, the primitive fathers must be revered as men of exalted piety and integrity. As *witnesses to matters of fact*, to the doctrines which were universally received, and to the usages which universally prevailed in the church, their testimony is invaluable; and in all controverted points, should be decisive. Whenever we find the primitive fathers concur in testifying that any doctrine or usage was universally received in the church as of divine authority and institution—to doubt or reject their testimony would be at once to relinquish the very foundations of the Christian faith. For their testimony is necessary to establish the canon of Scripture; to prove that the books which we now receive as inspired books, were revered and received as such in the apostolic and primitive age.

To the first writers of the church, therefore, we may safely recur for information in regard to its constitution, and the *orders* of the ministry. As these were *matters of fact*, it is not possible that the primitive fathers could err in regard to them: and since they were men of

undoubted piety and integrity, they would not attempt to deceive. It may confidently be asserted, that their testimony is not more clear and decisive, in regard to the genuineness and authenticity of the books of the sacred volume, than in regard to the *facts*—that the ministry was instituted by Christ and his apostles, under *three distinct* and *subordinate* orders; that these orders, retaining uniformly the same distinct ecclesiastical authority, were first styled apostles—bishops, presbyters or elders—and deacons; and afterwards bishops—presbyters, priests or elders—and deacons; that no one could lawfully exercise the ministry, unless ordained by a bishop; and that, through the order of bishops, as successors to the apostles, the priesthood was to be perpetuated, and all power to be derived from Christ, the supreme Head of the church.

It is conceded by those who, within these few last centuries, have advanced the novel opinion of the original *parity* of the orders of the ministry, that bishops were universally considered in the fourth century as superior to presbyters and deacons. It is unfortunate for them, when they maintain that the supremacy of bishops was an *innovation* on the apostolic constitution of the church, that no vestiges can be traced of a revolution which must have shaken the foundations of the church; that no record can be found of this daring *usurpation* of authority, by a few ambitious *presbyters*, over the rest of their brethren;

and that there are scarcely any two of those who assert this usurpation, who agree as to the time when it took place. Is not the conclusion irresistible and irrefragable, that if the church universal, from the third to the sixteenth century, was governed by *bishops*, as superior to *presbyters* and *deacons*—and if no period can be ascertained when this government was introduced into the church, it must be traced to *apostolic* institution, and of course rest on *divine authority*?*

This discussion is of the highest importance to him who is preparing to receive the holy eucharist. For the important truth results from it, that none can possess authority to administer the sacraments but those who have received a commission from the *bishops* of the church. It must be essential, therefore, to the efficacy of the Lord's supper, as a *means* and *pledge* of divine grace, that it be administered by those who have received *lawful* authority to administer it.

To this statement, which makes the blessings of the Gospel to depend on communion with the church, by the participation of its ordinances, administered by duly authorized ministers, the objection may be opposed, that it is *narrowing the path of salvation*. But if a solicitude be commendable to prevent the path of salvation from being unduly narrowed and confined, the solicitude to prevent it from being made more wide and easy than God has made

* See note A at the end of the volume.

it, is surely also commendable. To undervalue or remove those institutions which God hath established as the means of salvation, is to condemn his authority, and to endanger the souls of men. It is an unauthorized, a criminal, a cruel *charity*, which would present salvation to men, stripped of those conditions on which it is attainable. Real charity, the charity which most effectually promotes the welfare of men, would lead us faithfully to point out the conditions on which God will restore fallen man to his favour; and then earnestly and affectionately to enforce these conditions. In the inscrutable plan of Divine Providence, as it has hitherto been unfolded, every dispensation of his grace has been *confined* to a part only of mankind. Did he not call Abraham and his family from a corrupt world to be the distinguished repositories of his will, his blessing, and favour? Were not the Jews separated from the rest of the world, to be his chosen people; to whom "pertained the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises?" Are not Christians now called from the rest of the world to be "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people;" blessed with the glorious light of the Gospel, with the consoling and renovating efficacy of the Redeemer's merits and grace, with the splendid hopes of immortality? In thus *distinguishing* particular portions of the human race with his peculiar favours. God "acts ac-

according to the counsel of his own will;" "he giveth not to man an account of his doings;" he asserts the power of the potter over his clay, "to create one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour." As the Almighty Creator of the world, God may distribute his favours to mankind according to his sovereign pleasure. And when he finally determines the destinies of men, according to the improvement which they have made of the privileges conferred upon them, it can be no imputation on his justice or goodness that he distinguishes with peculiar favours particular portions of the human race, and renders them capable of higher bliss in a future state of existence. To suppose that the patriarchs, on whom shone the peculiar blessings of heaven; that the favoured nation of the Israelites, to whom the law was given in its divine majesty and lustre; and that Christians, under the luminous and glorious dispensation of the Gospel, were not rendered capable of higher degrees of virtue and happiness than the rest of mankind; would be to strip the favour and grace of God of their value and efficacy, and to render futile and contemptible the ordinances which he has appointed as the means of communion with him.

The Judge of the whole earth indeed will do right. The grace of God quickens and animates all the degenerate children of Adam. The mercy of the Saviour is co-extensive with the ruin into which sin has plunged mankind. And "in every nation, he that feareth God

and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." But where the Gospel is proclaimed, communion with the church by the participation of its ordinances at the hands of the duly authorized priesthood, is the prescribed method of salvation.* Separation from the divinely constituted ministry of the church, when it proceeds from *involuntary and unavoidable ignorance or error*, we have reason to trust will not intercept, from the humble, the penitent, and obedient, the blessings of God's favour. But when we humbly submit to that priesthood which Christ and his apostles constituted; when in the lively exercise of penitence and faith, we partake of the ordinances administered by them; we maintain our communion with that church which the Redeemer purifies by his blood; which he quickens by his Spirit; and whose faithful members he will finally crown with the most exalted glories of his heavenly kingdom. The important truth which the universal church has uniformly maintained, that to experience the full efficacy of the sacraments, we must receive them from a valid authority, is not inconsistent with that charity which extends mercy to all who labour under *involuntary error*. But great is the guilt, and imminent the danger, of those who, pos-

* In the first editions the expression was, "indispensable condition of salvation;" by which the author meant a condition with which man had no right to dispense. And he supposed his meaning would not be misunderstood; since, in the very next sentence, he expressed the opinion, that in certain cases there was reason to trust God would dispense with the condition which he had prescribed. The meaning of the author, however, having been misunderstood, the passage has been altered.

sessing the means of arriving at the knowledge of the truth, *negligently* or *wilfully* continue in a state of separation from the authorized ministry of the church, and participate of ordinances administered by an irregular and invalid authority. Wilfully rending the peace and unity of the church, by separating from the ministrations of its authorized priesthood; and contemning the means which God in his sovereign pleasure hath prescribed for their salvation; they are guilty of rebellion against their almighty Lawgiver and Judge; they expose themselves to the awful displeasure of that almighty Jehovah, who will not permit his institutions to be contemned, or his authority violated with impunity.

Let it be, therefore, thy supreme care, O my soul, to receive the blessed sacrament of the body and blood of thy Saviour, only from the hands of those who derive their authority by regular transmission from Christ, the divine head of the church, the only legitimate source of power in it. Thou wilt then enjoy the assurance, that his holy sacrament, which derives all its efficacy from the accompanying power of Christ, administered by those to whom he hath given his commission and authority, will be acknowledged and blessed by him to thy comfort and salvation; will, if humbly and devoutly received by thee, be the mean and pledge of his pardoning mercy and strengthening grace. By preserving thy communion with the authorized priesthood; by re-

vering that ministerial authority, and submitting to those institutions which thy Saviour established; thou wilt maintain the *unity of the church*, and thus fulfil the high injunction of Christ and his apostles often repeated and earnestly enforced. The humble and obedient member of his church on earth, thou wilt finally be advanced to those glorious rewards which he hath prepared in the Church Triumphant, for all the faithful members of his mystical body.

Deplorable, indeed, in this degenerate day, is the state of the church, where sect ariseth against sect, and altar against altar; where the apostolic ministry is invaded and violated; ordinances administered by invalid authority; and that sacred "body," which should be "one" with its divine "Head," rent by numberless schisms. Let it be the subject of thy earnest prayers to God, that by bestowing on the church the divine spirit of peace and concord, he would heal the divisions that now deface her glory. Let it be the object of thy earnest solicitude and exertions, to restore all who profess themselves Christians, to that apostolic order and ministry which were so long the glory of the universal church. She would then shine forth, as she did in the primitive ages, in the garments of glory and beauty; and, attracting the nations within her spiritual fold, would become a praise throughout the earth. "Jerusalem would be as a city that is at *unity* in itself. Thither the tribes would go up, even the tribes of the Lord, to testify unto

Israel, and to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." Christians, communing with the authorized ministers of the church, by the participation of the sacraments and ordinances duly administered by them, would be united "as one fold under one shepherd;" from their divine Head they would derive life, strength, and salvation; partaking at the same altar of the sacred body and blood of their Saviour, they would be nourished and prepared for the transcendent bliss of the Church Triumphant.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast "built thy church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone;" teach me ever to bear in mind, that in thy wise and sovereign Providence thou hast made this church the channel through which thy *covenanted* mercies are conveyed to a fallen world. Blessed be thy name, that thou hast called me into a state of salvation; and through the sacrament of baptism, conferred on me a title to the privileges of thy holy church. Impress on me the awful guilt and danger of forfeiting, by disobedience, by impenitence, or by neglect of thy holy ordinances, my title to the inestimable privileges of my Christian vocation. In the exercise of lively penitence and faith, may I humbly and thankfully partake of the ordinances of thy church; and thus maintaining my communion with it, derive from Jesus, its divine Head, pardon, grace, consolation, eternal glory. May I ever value, above all worldly distinctions and

pleasures, the privilege of being a member of thy church; and of thus having access to the infinite fountain of thy grace and mercy, thy everlasting love. Instead of presumptuously arraigning thy sovereign institutions, may I gratefully and humbly adore thee, that by the ordinances of thy church, thou dost vouchsafe to confer upon me the immortal blessings which, through transgression, I had forfeited.

I bless thee, O God, that by instituting officers in thy church, vested with a divine commission for the exercise of spiritual powers, thou hast made effectual provision for the administration of her sacraments and discipline, for her peace, her order, her unity, and glory. Almighty God, "the giver of all good gifts, who, of thy divine Providence, hast appointed divers orders in thy church, give thy grace, I humbly beseech thee, to all those who are called to any office and administration in the same; and so replenish them with the truth of thy doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that they may faithfully serve before thee, to the glory of thy great name, and the benefit of thy holy church." Blessed Jesus, the divine Head and Redeemer of thy mystical body the church, who dost possess "all power in heaven and in earth," may "the course of this world be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy church may evermore serve thee in peace and quietness." "Clothe thy priests with salvation, that thy people may rejoice." Thy servants, the bishops, in whom is vested, through thy mercy, the power of perpetuating in thy church, "to the end of the world," the divine authority of the priesthood, evermore guide and bless by thy heavenly grace; "that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but faithfully and wisely make

choice of fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of thy holy church." To them, as well as to all other ministers, the presbyters and deacons who serve in thy holy sanctuary, give thy "heavenly benediction; that, both by their life and doctrine, they may set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments." On me, also, thy unworthy servant, shed, O merciful God, thy heavenly grace, that, by devoutly attending on the ministrations of thy priesthood, I may continue in the unity of thy church; and refreshed and strengthened by the mercy and grace dispensed through thy ordinances may serve thee in holiness and righteousness, all the days of my life, and finally be a partaker of the glory and felicity of thy heavenly kingdom.

Almighty God, have mercy upon thy holy church, the spiritual Zion in which thou dost delight to dwell. "Inspire her continually with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord." Rebuild thou her waste places; restore her in the beauty of holiness; unite in her communion all those who call upon thy name; may they reverence thy power in the persons of the ministering servants of thy church, and endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. May the lamp of truth, in thy sanctuary shedding divine light, disperse all heresy and error, and its altar ever be attended by devout and holy guests. May the whole of thy dispersed sheep, blessed Jesus, be brought home to thy flock, and united in one fold under thee, the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SATURDAY EVENING.

MEDITATION.

On the Nature and Benefits of the Lord's Supper.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, &c.

It was in the solemn and interesting hour, when a cruel death was about to separate the blessed Jesus from his disciples, and when sorrow and despondency, in the prospect of losing their beloved Master, had overwhelmed them—that our Saviour instituted a holy rite to be the seal of his mercy and grace, and enjoined it on his disciples, as the memorial of his dying love. Engaged in celebrating the passover, a rite commemorative of the deliverance of the Jews from the wrath of the destroying angel, he had been offering up the *paschal lamb*, a memorial of that lamb, whose blood, sprinkled on the houses of the Jews, had been the pledge of their deliverance. But the time had arrived when the shadows and types of the law were to be all consummated in the glorious person of the Saviour, whom they had all foreshown, to whom they had all borne witness. Instead of the *legal victim*, he substituted *himself* as the true *paschal lamb*, and to avert the wrath of divine justice from a

guilty world, offered himself up an *all-sufficient sacrifice* to his Almighty Father. He took *bread*, and consecrated it to be the symbol of his *body*, which was to be given for the sins of the world. He blessed the *cup of wine*, to represent his *blood*, which was to be shed to atone for sin. He appointed these sacred *elements* to be the representative *symbols* of the *sacrifice* of the cross, the *memorial* of his precious sufferings and death, by which our redemption was effected. And that the blessings of this sacrifice might be conveyed to his redeemed people to the end of the world, he gave authority to his *apostles* and their *successors* to consecrate *bread* and *wine* as the memorials of his body and blood; through the devout participation of which, his humble and penitent followers should receive all the inestimable blessings of his salvation.

Contemplate, O my soul, with holy awe, this sacred mystery; contemplate, with lively gratitude, the inestimable blessings which thy Saviour conveys to thee, through this hallowed ordinance. Christians, uniting with their authorized ministers in the celebration of this holy sacrament, present before God a memorial of that all-sufficient sacrifice which the Saviour made. Receiving with lively faith the consecrated elements, they are made partakers of all those blessings which were purchased by the *offering* which Christ made of his sacred body and blood. They are cleansed from *sin*; they are restored to *communion* and

peace with God; they are strengthened by the presence and consolations of his *Holy Spirit*; they are preserved by the vivifying body and blood of Christ unto *everlasting life*.

Oh! sublime and precious mystery! Jesus, exalted in glory, condescends to become, by representative symbols, the spiritual *food*, *support*, and *strength*, of his people. Surrounding this holy table, Christians hear the voice of their blessed Redeemer pronouncing their pardon; they receive, as it were, from his own hands, the pledges of their salvation, the sacred emblems of his life-giving body and blood. "As often as they eat this bread and drink this cup, they do show forth the Lord's death till he come."

Bless God, O my soul, for his infinite love in giving his *only Son* for thy redemption. Bless thy Saviour for graciously condescending to institute a rite, in which, under the most lively and affecting emblems, thou mayest commemorate his death, and be made partaker of the benefits of his passion. Art thou desirous, O my soul, to obtain that peace and happiness which thou hast in vain sought from a disappointing world? Go to the holy supper of thy Lord, where he waits to dispense to thee a peace which passeth all understanding; which the world can neither give nor take away; which his infinite mercy inspires; which his almighty grace cherishes; and which shall flourish for ever under the *smiles* of his love. Art thou weary and heavy

laden, O my soul, under the burden of thy sins, under the oppressing cares and sorrows of the world? Go to the altar, where the arms of thy Redeemer are extended to embrace thee, to shield thee in his bosom from every guilty pang, and from every corroding sorrow. Do unholy passions invade thy peace; does temptation overcome thy frail resolutions; does sin defile thee, O my soul, and render thee obnoxious to that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? Go to the altar, where thy gracious Redeemer sits enthroned, glorious in his power, mighty to save. By his almighty fiat, he will quell the tumult of thy guilty passions; his heavenly grace descending upon thee, will purify thy affections; will guide thee through all difficulties; will arm thee with victorious strength over all temptations. In the imperfect and transitory gratifications of the present life, thou dost in vain seek, O my soul, for that full and substantial enjoyment for which thy aspiring powers ardently pant. Go then to the altar, and receiving with lively faith the pledges of thy Saviour's grace and mercy, enjoy a foretaste of that never-ending and ineffable bliss, which, in the kingdom of heaven, thou shalt drink at the everlasting fountain of perfection and love.

Yes, O my God, thy service alone constitutes the perfection of my nature; thy service alone leads to perfect and eternal bliss. I resolve to choose thee, O my God, as my supreme good, my unfailing and satisfying por-

tion. Blessed Jesus, thou who art the only way of access unto the Father, conduct me to the light of his reconciled countenance.

THE PRAYER.

O MERCIFUL and gracious God, the fountain of being and all perfection ; I bless thee that thou hast created me capable of knowing, of loving, and of serving thee. For ever blessed be thy name, that when I had wandered from thee, the source of light and felicity, thou didst not give me up to that blindness and misery, which I had courted, and which would have been my merited portion. For ever blessed by thy name, that when, by my sins, I had provoked thy just displeasure, thou didst, in mercy, forbear to execute upon me the severity of thy awful wrath. Blessed, for ever blessed, O God, be thy holy name, that thou didst even give thy only-begotten and well-beloved Son to suffering and death, to purchase my redemption. Glory be for ever ascribed to thee, for the inestimable gift. O may this display of infinite love awaken in my heart the emotions of lively gratitude, and penetrate me with compunction for having so long neglected thee, my gracious Redeemer and God. Dispose me now to choose thy service as my highest duty, my supreme delight and enjoyment. Blessed Jesus, who, by thy precious blood, hast atoned for my sins, and in the powerful grace of thy Holy Spirit, hast provided the means of my redemption, with humble reverence and gratitude I adore thee for thy infinite love, in conveying to me, by sensible pledges, the *assurances* of thy grace and mercy, in nourishing *and strengthening* me, under lively emblems, with

thy spiritual body and blood. O may my earnest desires be awakened to partake in the holy sacrament of thy supper, of thy life-giving body, of thy purifying blood—to seal by them my pardon, my peace, my restoration to holiness and eternal felicity. Do thou, O God, awaken, by thy grace, these holy desires, and strengthen my resolutions of serving thee. Dispel the doubts, allay the apprehensions, remove every indolent or sensual pretext, which would deter me from receiving the memorials of my Saviour's love, the pledges of my eternal salvation. With lively desires, with humble penitence, and steadfast faith, approaching this holy table, may I be accepted and blessed, through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

SUNDAY MORNING.

MEDITATION.

The Dispositions with which the Communicant should advance to the Altar.

THOU hast reviewed, O my soul, thy spiritual character, privileges, and hopes. Thou hast sought to lay the foundation of thy preparation for the holy eucharist, where, indeed, the foundation of thy spiritual life should be laid, in a deep conviction of thy fallen and condemned state. Awakened to a sense of thy guilt and unworthiness, thou hast humbled thyself before the throne of God, in the exercises of repentance; and, having devoted thyself with renewed ardour to his service, hast

implored the succours of his Holy Spirit to enable thee to serve him in newness of life. Deeply sensible of thy need of the cleansing blood and renovating grace of a Saviour, thou hast sought to secure an interest in his merits and favour, by lively faith in him; and hast acknowledged him, in all his exalted offices, as the eternal Son of the Father, thy Prophet, thy Priest, and King. With the fervours of lively gratitude, thou hast traced the series of sufferings which thy Saviour endured with divine magnanimity and fortitude; which, while they excited thy exalted admiration, served to confirm thy faith. Thou hast reviewed the sufferings by which the Saviour at once impressed the humble and forgiving spirit of his Gospel, and made an all-sufficient expiation for thy sins. About to participate of an ordinance which derives all its efficacy from its divine Institutor, thou hast attentively considered the important truth, that God conveys his grace and favour through the channel of rites and ordinances, administered by a priesthood deriving their authority from the divine Head of the church. Happy art thou, O my soul, if, through divine grace, that holy and spiritual life, which the sacred exercises in which thou hast been engaged are calculated to form in thee, has been excited or confirmed. If thou hast sincerely sought the mercy and favour of thy God, dismiss now every doubt or apprehension; and resolve to quicken thy repentance, to confirm thy faith, to animate thy

zeal, to seal thy vows of duty in the holy eucharist. Resolve to seek those strengthening, enlivening, and immortal graces which, in this ordinance, are bestowed upon the penitent and faithful soul.

Consider this sacred rite as a lively and affecting memorial of the death of Christ; and receive the symbols of his sufferings with humble *penitence*.

The altar presents an almighty victim, consumed as a sacrifice to divine justice. Call to mind then, at the altar, the affecting truth, that thy wilful rebellion against the righteous authority of God, rendered it necessary that the eternal Son should descend from the throne of his glory, to vindicate and satisfy, by his death, the honour of the divine government, the claims of divine justice. Behold thy Saviour laid on the cross, as on an altar, where the holiness and justice of an offended God fully satisfied their claims. See his blessed body, innocent and pure as the divine soul which animated it, smitten, scourged, and bruised. Behold issuing from his wounded side that precious blood which purchased the life of the world. Ah! shall I deliberately crucify afresh that sacred body which my sins at first fastened on the cross? Shall I tear open the wounds which the fury of a barbarous multitude inflicted on the sacred body of the Redeemer of men? Oh! just and heavy will be my condemnation, if, with a heart unsubdued and impenitent, I approach the altar where the Sa-

viour is exhibited, sustaining the inflictions of his Father's wrath, and expiating my guilt.

Tremble, lukewarm and impenitent soul, lest the symbols of the body and blood of that Redeemer, to whose astonishing love thou art insensible, instead of proving the pledges of divine favour, seal the sentence of condemnation on thy ingratitude and contempt. Yes, the altar displays only terror and wrath to the impenitent. But to the humble spirit, who is oppressed by the anxious apprehension that she does not yet possess that lively contrition, and fervent affection, which would render her worthy to partake of the supper of the Lord—to her, the altar conveys the consoling accents of mercy. The very fears that oppress thee, timid and doubting penitent, are the strongest proofs of an exquisite sensibility to the claims of thy Saviour's love; they are the best evidence that thou dost possess that meek and contrite spirit, which it is the Saviour's office and delight to sooth and comfort.

Behold then, my soul, in the sufferings and death of Christ, commemorated on the altar, both an exhibition of the indignation of God against sin, and of the infinite compassion of the Son of God, in offering himself up an all-sufficient victim to turn from thee the wrath of heaven, Let this view excite a holy solicitude to escape the penalties due to thy sins—a lively and ingenuous sorrow for their baseness and enormity. Humbled at the feet of the Saviour, confess, lament, and renounce the

sins which occasioned his sufferings—lay them on the altar of his love—they shall be blotted out for ever by his precious blood, which taketh away the sins of the world.

Receive the symbols of the Saviour's suffering and death with lively *gratitude*.

This ordinance, by forcibly displaying the agonizing sufferings of the Saviour, serves to excite the most lively sense of his infinite love. Sufferings and agony inconceivable the Son of God encountered, to redeem the wretched race of man. From the manger at Bethlehem to the hill of Calvary, poverty, contumely, scorn, persecution, like indignant waves, pressed upon him, till at length his soul sunk under the floods of divine wrath. Ah! we shall not wonder at the bitter agonies which overwhelmed him, when we consider the tremendous conflict which he sustained with the king of terrors; who, dreading the near dissolution of his reign, exerted his most vigorous efforts to crush the almighty Conqueror, who threatened to bind him in chains. Oh! what pangs convulsed the Saviour, when on the cross he bowed under the load of human guilt! Forsaken in this dark hour by the smiles of his Father's love, which had hitherto supported him, he uttered the piercing cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In this direful moment dismay seized the bosom of nature, which heaved in dreadful agitation, as if in unison with the groan that terminated the agonies of the Lord of life. O my soul, for thee the

Redeemer sunk under these accumulated agonies. Shall not the symbols of his sufferings excite the ardent emotions of gratitude to him who displayed for thee this infinite love? By this compassionate Saviour, thou hast been redeemed from the dominion of sin and death—from everlasting misery and wo. By the sacrifice of his death, thou art restored to the favour of God, and to the glorious hope of the bliss of heaven. The inestimable blessings which he purchased for thee, thou art called to acknowledge in the affecting rite which he instituted, when the painful death awaited him, that was to consummate his sufferings. Oh! let the tears of devout gratitude be shed over the emblems of thy Saviour's dying love.

Offer to thy blessed Redeemer, at the altar,
vows of ardent devotion to his service.

Redeeming thee, O my soul, by the sacrifice of his cross, from the ignominious bondage of sin and Satan, from the curse of eternal death; and purchasing for thee the inestimable blessings of pardon, peace, and everlasting life, he establishes a supreme claim to thy homage, thy love, and obedience. He becomes thy rightful Sovereign, Lord, and Master. He can claim thy sincere and holy obedience as a right; thou art bound to render it to him as a just debt of gratitude and love. By ardent devotion to his service; by generous, tender, and active love to mankind, whom he died to redeem; thou must manifest thy sensibility to his infinite compassion, and discharge the ob-

ligations by which thou art bound to him. No period can be more proper to offer to the Saviour the vows of love and duty than the period when thou art commemorating the infinite sacrifice of his precious death, which was the price of thy redemption. Consider the state of guilt, of condemnation, and misery, to which sin had reduced thee. Contemplate the exalted blessings of that spiritual redemption which the Saviour wrought for thee. The pangs of guilt he hath exchanged for the comforts of a good conscience; the apprehensions of the wrath of God, for the joys of the divine favour; the curse of a mortal and perishing body, for a body incorruptible and glorious; the sorrows and trials of this mortal life, for the bliss and glories of an immortal existence. The almighty grace and love which achieved this glorious redemption, and which still assure it to the humble and penitent, are set forth in the commemorative sacrifice of the eucharist. Go then, my soul, to the festival which celebrates this infinite love of the Saviour, adoring his infinite compassion; triumphing in the glorious victories of his grace; rendering to him who bought thee by his blood the vows of allegiance and duty. Let the precious symbols of the altar, the lively memorials of the victorious love of the Saviour, impress upon thee his claims to thy sincere and holy obedience. Over the emblems of his body and blood, offered for thy redemption, seal the grateful vows of duty, which shall bind

thee for ever to thy Lord. Almighty Redeemer, purchased by thy blood, to thee I wholly surrender myself. All the powers of my soul, all its desires and hopes, shall be engaged in thy service, and centre in thy love. Ah! shall I be reluctant in the service of a Master, with whom I am connected by the most endearing ties? Shall I murmur at the sacrifices to which that Redeemer calls me, who, in effecting my redemption, was deterred by no difficulties, and shrunk from no pains? No, my Saviour, the constraining power of thy love shall render easy to me all thy commands, and even endear to me the self-denial and ignominy of thy cross. Receiving the symbol of thy crucified body, the glorious pledge of my redemption, I will vow thee eternal allegiance. Receiving the symbol of thy precious blood, the divine fountain of life and bliss, I will devote myself to thee, O my Saviour, who knowest the weakness of my heart, and its proneness to forget thee; strengthen me to perform the resolutions by which I now enlist under thy banner, and attach myself to thy service.

Advance to the altar, *relying supremely on the merits and grace of that Saviour* whose all-sufficient sacrifice for sin thou art to commemorate.

There is no other name, but the name of Jesus, whereby the perishing race of man can be saved. His infinite sacrifice, the meritorious propitiation for sin, is commemorated in the holy eucharist, where he is set forth as the all-sufficient Saviour of his people. To set up

any claim of forgiveness in opposition to the all-sufficient atonement which he made; to rely for acceptance at the throne of God on our own merits, when he offers his all-perfect righteousness to sanctify and save us—would be to derogate from the infinite efficacy of his precious blood, and to dishonour that all-perfect righteousness, which alone can answer the claims of divine holiness. Ah! when I contemplate the terrors which issue from the throne of my offended Judge, I bless thee, O my Saviour, that I can flee for refuge to thy protecting bosom—I bless thee, that, in the holy sacrament of thy love, thou dost apply to me the saving merits of thy body, given for my sins; and dost sprinkle my guilty soul with the precious blood that was shed for my redemption.

Go then, O my soul, to the altar where the emblems of the body and blood of the Saviour are set forth as the pledges of mercy and spiritual life; renouncing every dependence but the merits and grace of thy Redeemer. Unworthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under his table, go, and derive pardon, comfort, strength, and salvation, at the banquet of his precious body and blood. Go—earnestly desiring his mercy, and adoring him as thy all-sufficient Saviour; and he will confer on thee the everlasting treasures of his love. However great the attainments which through his grace thou hast made in virtue, rely not on them as the pledges of thy peace with

heaven, when thou dost behold the all-sufficient sacrifice of his cross. In the blood of Jesus, set forth in his holy sacrament, thou wilt find the only expiation of thy guilt; from the fountain of grace there opened, are spiritual life and consolation dispensed. Seated on the altar, as an almighty and compassionate Saviour, he presents to the faithful, through his authorized ministers, the symbols of his body and blood given and shed for them. Take, *eat*, this is my *body*, which was given for you—let it be the pledge of your salvation, of your vital union with me, your Redeemer. *Drink*—this is my *blood*, which was *shed* for you—let it be the fountain of pardon, of comfort, of everlasting joys. Wonder, O my soul, at the riches of the Saviour's mercy! Wonder, O my soul, at the fulness of his grace! Go, ye faithful, to the altar, where Jesus is waiting to receive you, triumphing in his mercy, his power, and his love. Wounded with a sense of guilt, go, and receive the balm of divine mercy, with which the Saviour pacifies the awakened conscience. Labouring under the thralldom of sinful passions, go, and receive grace to overcome their dominion. Desponding and sorrowing under the trials of your pilgrimage, go, and receive from your Saviour celestial comfort. Humble, weak, and perishing, go, and receive strength, support, everlasting life—go, and embrace by faith that blessed Redeemer who hath promised to visit his people with his salvation, to dwell with them as

their guide, their comforter, their everlasting portion and reward.

Yes, my Saviour, encouraged by the solicitations of thy love, I will go to thy altar, and commemorate with the faithful the riches of thy mercy; with them implore the manifestations of thy grace. When I receive the sacred emblems of thy body and blood, O do thou manifest thyself to my soul. Come, and reign in me for ever, my Saviour, my Lord, my Almighty King.

THE PRAYER.

BLESSED JESUS, who hast given thyself to be the life of the world; and hast graciously instituted the sacrament of thy holy supper, to be a lively memorial of thy infinite love, and pledge of thy grace and mercy; behold me, thy unworthy servant, waiting upon thee for pardon, for strength, and salvation—Lead me, O my Saviour, to thy altar, and there display thyself to my soul, in the glorious fulness of thy mercy and power.

“I do not presume to come to this thy table, O Lord, trusting in my own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies.” Sin has defiled my soul; has laden with guilt my conscience; has rendered me utterly unworthy of thy favour; has exposed me to thy just and everlasting wrath. Blessed be thy name, O Lord, that in thee there is mercy and plenteous redemption. Humbly confessing my unworthiness and guilt, and casting myself on thy infinite compassion, O do thou convey to me, in thy holy supper, the forgiveness of my sins, my title to

thy love and everlasting favour. To thy service I desire to devote myself—to thee, O my God, I vow steadfast obedience and homage. O accept me at thy holy table as thy devoted servant and subject. Seal to my soul the blessings of the everlasting covenant. Thee, O my Saviour, I adore as my Lord and my God. To thy celestial instructions I will evermore hearken ; to thy all-sufficient atonement I will evermore flee ; to the sceptre of thy grace I will evermore willingly bow. Receive and acknowledge me, blessed Jesus, at thy holy table, among the number of thy redeemed people. I bless thee for the infinite love which thou hast displayed in my redemption—for the unutterable sufferings and agonizing death which were the price of my ransom from guilt and condemnation. Glory be to thee, O thou Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world. May my grateful sense of thy infinite compassion be manifested by sincere devotion to thy commands ; by lively and active charity to all mankind, for whom thou didst shed thy blood. Thus confessing my sins ; steadfastly purposing to lead a new life ; relying supremely on thy merits and grace ; thankfully celebrating thy meritorious sufferings and death ; and cherishing the sentiments of lively and ardent love—may I approach thy holy altar, and experience the quickening efficacy of thy body and blood. May they shed through my soul their consoling, renovating, and strengthening power, and nourish me to everlasting life. May these symbols of thy love afford my soul a rich foretaste of the exalted bliss which the fruition of thy glorious presence will afford.

O most gracious God, measure thy blessings to me, not by my deserts, but by thy infinite mercies. Shed now the full power of thy Holy Spirit through

my heart, that all my affections and desires may be in lively exercise when I approach thy holy altar. There may I enjoy the manifestations of thy mercy—there may I experience that thou art infinitely gracious—that truly blessed are they who put their trust in thee. And oh! may the exalted joys of thy love, shed through my soul at thy holy table, awaken my ardent desires for the glorious consummation of bliss in thy heavenly kingdom, where there is fulness of joy; where there are pleasures for evermore. Even so, O my God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. *Amen;*

THE ORDER FOR THE
ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER,
OR
HOLY COMMUNION.

¶ The excellent and affecting office for the Holy Communion, prescribed by the Church, is the best guide to his devotions at the altar that the communicant can possibly have, and renders almost unnecessary all other aid. It should be the business of the communicant seriously to attend to this service, and heartily and sincerely to join in it. As he goes up towards the chancel, let him secretly use the following ejaculations:

In the multitude of thy mercies, O Lord, do I now approach thine altar.

I will pay thee my vows now in the presence of all thy people.

Thou art my God, and I will bless thee; thou art my God, and I will exalt thee.

God is the Lord, by whom we receive light; bind the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar.

¶ When the minister reads the sentences of the Offertory, let the communicant offer up after each sentence, the short ejaculation annexed.

¶ When there is a communion, the minister shall return to the Lord's table, and begin the Offertory, saying one or more of these sentences following, as he thinketh most convenient.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. *St. Matt. v. 16.*

(O Almighty God, give me grace to honour thee by a life of holiness and active charity; and may those who are the objects of my beneficence, render their praises to thee, the gracious Father and Benefactor of mankind.)

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal : But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. *St. Matt.* vi. 19, 20.

(Free my soul, O God, from the inordinate love of riches ; and dispose me earnestly to seek the satisfying treasures of thy heavenly kingdom.)

Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do to them : For this is the law and the prophets. *St. Matt.* vii. 12.

(Give me grace, O God, ever sacredly to observe this rule of eternal justice.)

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. *St. Matt.* vii. 21.

(Grant, O God, that I may never build my hope of salvation upon an outward *profession* only, without a life of *holiness and virtue*.—May my faith in thy name produce the fruit of good living.)

Zaccheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor ; and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore four-fold. *St. Luke* xix. 8.

(If thou, O Lord, hast given me ability, give me a disposition also to be both just and ~~charitable~~, that thou mayest ~~say~~ to me, as thou didst to this publican, *Salvation is come to thy house*.)

Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own cost ? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof ? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock ? *1 Cor.* ix. 7.

(O God, may I cheerfully and readily give a portion of my worldly substance to the support of the

servants of the sanctuary, who labour in spiritual things.)

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your worldly things?

1 Cor. ix. 11.

(May I evermore endeavour, by every mean in my power, to promote the temporal comfort and happiness of those who devote their time and their talents to ministering to my spiritual necessities.)

Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things, live of the sacrifice; and they who wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel. *1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.*

(Since thou, O Lord, hast thus ordained—far be it from me to withhold from thy ministers the maintenance which is their just and inviolable due.)

He that soweth little, shall reap little; and he that soweth plenteously, shall reap plenteously. Let every man do according as he is disposed in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver. *2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.*

(May I ever proportion my alms to my ability, lest I provoke God to proportion his blessings to my alms.)

Let him that is taught in the word, minister unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. *Gal. vi. 6, 7.*

(There is no return, O God, which we can make to thy ministers, equal to the blessings which they bestow upon us: For they minister unto us the means of grace and salvation.)

While we have time, let us do good unto all men; and especially unto them that are of the household of faith. *Gal. vi. 10.*

(Blessed be God, that I have yet time! Lord,

give me a heart to do good *before the night cometh, when no man can work.*)

Godliness is great riches, if a man be content with that he hath: For we brought nothing into the world, neither may we carry any thing out. *1 Tim. vi. 6, 7.*

(Grant me, O God, a *pious and contented* mind; and for the rest—*thy will be done!*)

Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be ready to give, and glad to distribute; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life. *1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19.*

(If thou hast given me riches, O God, grant me *grace* to employ them in works of beneficence and mercy, that thus they may be instrumental in advancing my eternal felicity.)

God is not unrighteous, that he will forget your works, and labour that proceedeth of love; which love ye have showed for his name's sake, who have ministered unto the saints, and yet do minister. *Heb. vi. 10.*

(O blessed Lord, how great is thy goodness! All that I have is thine; and yet thou dost condescend to receive every act of charity to thy saints and servants, as if it were done unto thyself.)

To do good and to distribute, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. *Heb. xiii. 16.*

(May our prayers and our alms ascend unto thee, O God; and do thou graciously accept them for Jesus Christ's sake.)

Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? *1 John iii. 17.*

(O my God and Saviour! may I ever manifest my love and gratitude to thee, by acts of beneficence and kindness to my fellow men.)

Give alms of thy goods, and never turn thy face from any poor man ; and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee. *Tob. iv. 7.*

(Grant me, O Lord, a lively compassion for the miseries of others, that thou mayest finally have compassion on me.)

Be merciful after thy power. If thou hast much, give plenteously. If thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little : for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward, in the day of necessity. *Tob. iv. 8, 9.*

(I thank thee, O God, that thou dost not judge or reward according to the *greatness* of the gift, but according to the *disposition* and *ability* of the giver. And after *all*, thy rewards infinitely exceed the merits of our most exalted acts of virtue.)

He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord : and look, what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again. *Prov. xix. 17.*

(Blessed be thy name, O God, that thou dost vouchsafe to regard my beneficence to the poor as a favour rendered unto thyself ; and dost graciously promise to repay me from the exhaustless treasure of thine infinite mercies.)

Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy : the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble. *Psaln xli. 1.*

(O Lord, may I carefully avoid all idle and vain expenses, that I may thus be always able to administer to the consolation and support of the *sick and needy*. May a principle of divine charity and love evermore animate and inspire me, that thus, in time of trouble, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, I may with confidence flee to thee as my refuge and my portion.

¶ Ejaculation to be used at offering our alms.

O Lord, from the bounties of thy Providence

with which thou hast crowned my lot, I cheerfully and humbly devote a portion to the service of thy altar—to the relief and comfort of the distressed members of Christ's mystical body. To thee be all the glory and all the praise, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*)

¶ Whilst these sentences are in reading, the deacons, church-wardens, or other fit persons appointed for that purpose, shall receive the alms for the poor, and other devotions of the people, in a decent basin, to be provided by the parish for that purpose; and reverently bring it to the priest, who shall humbly present and place it upon the holy table.

(¶ Before the prayer for Christ's church militant, if an opportunity offer, use the following prayer :

Saviour of the world ! I come to thy altar to commemorate thy dying love ; to plead the merits of thy cross and passion ; to testify my unshaken faith in thee ; my communion with thy holy church ; my charity with all mankind. Blessed Jesus ! who hast called me to the participation of the sacred mysteries of thy altar, guide and aid me in my devotions ; quicken my repentance ; animate my faith and gratitude ; fix my contemplations on the eternal glories of thy mercy and grace. Nourished and strengthened by the sacred symbols of thy body and blood, may both my soul and body be prepared for that everlasting life which thou hast purchased by thy merits ; and which thou dost bestow on all those who believe in thy saving name, and rely alone on thy mercy and power. Even so, blessed Jesus. *Amen.*)

¶ And the priest shall then place upon the table so much bread and wine as he shall think sufficient. After which done, he shall say,

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's church militant.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who, by thy holy apostle, hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks for all men ; we humbly

beseech thee most mercifully [**to accept our alms and oblations, and*] to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy Divine Majesty; beseeching thee to inspire continually the universal church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy name, may agree in the truth of thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech thee also, so to direct and dispose the hearts of all Christian rulers, that they may truly and impartially administer justice to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of thy true religion and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments. And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present; that with meek heart, and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy word; truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless thy holy name, for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear; beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom: Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

¶ At the time of the celebration of the communion, the priest shall say this exhortation.

[¶ During this exhortation, the communicants should stand. Afterwards, at the confession, they are required to kneel.]

DEARLY beloved in the Lord, ye who mind to come to the holy communion of the body and blood

If there be no alms or oblations, then shall the words (to accept our alms and oblations, and) be left unsaid.

of our Saviour Christ, must consider how St. Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith, we receive that holy sacrament; so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily. Judge, therefore, yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent ye truly for your sins past; have a lively and steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men: so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy mysteries. And above all things, ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man; who did humble himself even to the death upon the cross, for us miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death; that he might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. And to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by his precious blood-shedding he hath obtained for us, he hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort. To him, therefore, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks; submitting ourselves wholly to his holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve him in true holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life. *Amen.*

¶ Then shall the priest say to those who come to receive the holy communion,

YE who do truly and earnestly repent you of

your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways; draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

¶ Then shall this general confession be made by the priest and all those who are minded to receive the holy communion, humbly kneeling:

ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty; provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant, that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Then shall the priest (the bishop, if he be present,) stand up, and turning to the people, say,

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

(¶ After the absolution is pronounced, to which you should attentively and devoutly listen, as the declaration of God through his authorized servant, use the following short ejaculation:

May this absolution, O God, seal to my soul the forgiveness of my sins.)

¶ Then shall the priest say,

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all who truly turn to him.

[¶ After each of the following sentences use the short ejaculations annexed.]

COME unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *St. Matt. xi. 28.*

(Make me, O Jesus, truly sensible of my guilt and unworthiness; that oppressed with the burden of my sins, I may go to thee for rest and deliverance.)

So God loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *St. John iii. 16.*

(O Lord, I believe—increase and establish my faith; that, ever loving and serving thee, I may finally, through thy mercy, be made partaker of everlasting glory.)

Hear also what *St. Paul* saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. *1 Tim. i. 15.*

(I bless thee, O Jesus, who, moved by infinite compassion, didst come into the world to save sinners.)

Hear also what *St. John* saith.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins. *1 John ii. 1, 2.*

(O blessed Jesus, by thy blood and merits, by thy powerful intercession, procure my pardon and deliverance from the guilt and condemnation of sin.)

¶ After which the priest shall proceed, saying,

Lift up your hearts.

Answer. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

Answer. It is meet and right so to do.

¶ Then shall the priest turn to the Lord's table, and say,

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, (*Holy Father,) almighty, everlasting God.

¶ Here shall follow the proper preface, according to the time, if there be any specially appointed; or else immediately shall be said or sung by the priest and people:

[¶ Here the communicants should rise from their knees, and stand. Standing is the proper posture for the ascription of praise.]

THEREFORE with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High. Amen.

¶ PROPER PREFACES.

¶ Upon Christmas-day, and seven days after.

BECAUSE thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born as at this time for us; who, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made very man, of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother; and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin: Therefore with angels, &c.

¶ Upon Easter-day, and seven days after.

BUT chiefly are we bound to praise thee for the glorious resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord: For he is the very Paschal Lamb, which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin

* These words [*Holy Father*] must be omitted on Trinity Sunday.

of the world ; who by his death hath destroyed death, and, by his rising to life again, hath restored to us everlasting life : Therefore with angels, &c.

¶ Upon Ascension-day, and seven days after.

THROUGH thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; who, after his most glorious resurrection, manifestly appeared to all his apostles, and in their sight ascended up into heaven, to prepare a place for us ; that where he is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in glory : Therefore with angels, &c.

¶ Upon Whit-Sunday, and six days after.

THROUGH Jesus Christ our Lord ; according to whose most true promise, the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven, with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the apostles, to teach them, and to lead them to all truth ; giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness with fervent zeal, constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations ; whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error, into the clear light and true knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ : Therefore with angels, &c.

¶ Upon the Feast of Trinity only, may be said,

Who art one God, one Lord ; not only one person, but three persons in one substance : For that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality : Therefore with angels, &c.

¶ Or else this may be said, the words [Holy Father] being retained in the introductory address.

For the precious death and merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and for the sending to us

of the Holy Ghost the Comforter; who are one with thee in thy eternal Godhead: Therefore with angels, &c.

¶ Then shall the priest, kneeling down at the Lord's table, say, in the name of all those who shall receive the communion, this prayer following:

[¶ In this most affecting and solemn form of humiliation, the communicants acknowledge, through the minister, their great unworthiness, and the unmerited mercy of God, in admitting them to his holy table. In this act of humiliation, every communicant should secretly join with lively fervour and devotion, kneeling.]

We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and be in us. *Amen.*

[¶ The prayer of consecration now follows; and while the priest is engaged in the solemn act of consecrating the bread and wine, the communicant should fix his devout affections on his Saviour, whose blood is an all-sufficient propitiation for the sins of the world. When the bread is broken, call to mind the grief and agony of him *who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*. When the cup of wine is blessed, think of him who, under the weight of our sins, sweat great drops of blood, and on the cross *made his soul an offering for sin*. When the consecrated bread and wine are offered to God as a memorial of the one great sacrifice of Christ, bless the Almighty Father who gave his Son for the sins of offending man, and who, through Christ, is reconciling the world unto himself. When the power of Divine Grace is invoked on the holy elements, devoutly adore and bless the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who applies to the soul the mercies of redemption. And let the surrender which you make of yourself to the service of God, your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, be sincere, ardent, and universal.]

¶ When the priest, standing before the table, hath so ordered the bread and wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the bread before the people, and take the cup into his hand; he shall say the prayer of consecration, as followeth:

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly

Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption ; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world ; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice until his coming again :

(a) Here the Priest is to take the Paten into his hands. For in the night in which he was betrayed (a) he took bread ; and

(b) And here to break the bread. when he had given thanks, (b) he brake it, and gave it to his disciples,

(c) And here to lay his hands upon all the bread. saying, Take, eat, (c) this is my Body, which is given for you ; Do this in remembrance of me.

(d) Here he is to take the cup into his hand. Likewise, after supper (d) he took the cup ; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying,

(e) And here he is to lay his hand upon every vessel in which there is any wine to be consecrated. Drink ye all of this, for (e) this is my Blood, of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins ; Do this as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

The Oblation. Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make ; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension ; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks, for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by

the same. And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear The Invocation. us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood. And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant, that by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls, and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this holy communion, may worthily receive the most precious body and blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in them, and they in him. And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice; yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences; through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ Here shall be sung a hymn, or a part of a hymn, from the selection for the Feasts and Fasts, &c.

[¶ While the priest, the clergy, and others, are receiving the consecrated elements, the communicant should be engaged in devoutly reading the following meditations.]

St. Luke xv. 2.—*The Pharisees murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.*

I bless thee, O my Saviour, that thou didst not proudly ~~contemn~~ the company of sinners. I confess that I am indeed an unworthy sinner. O receive me, as a guest at thy table, and make me partaker of the blessings of thy love.

St. John. vi. 58.—*He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.*

O Jesus, who hast made the life of our souls to depend on the consecrated bread, the symbol of thy life-giving body, may I never render myself unworthy of so great a blessing, or deprive myself of it through my own wilful negligence. May this sacred bread be a principle of immortal life to me, uniting me to thee for ever, my Saviour and my Lord.

Exodus xii. 23.—*When he seeth the blood of the Paschal Lamb on the door, he will not suffer the destroyer to come in to smite you.*

O Jesus, the true *Paschal Lamb*, who by thy precious blood hast paid the debt due to divine justice, and hast delivered us from the power of the destroyer, sprinkle me with thy precious blood, that I may be rescued from the condemning sentence of thy justice.

Galatians iii. 13.—*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; that is—he was treated as one under the curse of the law. Deut. xxi. 23.*

Blessed God! how great was our *misery*! How great was thy *mercy*! The death of thy Son only could save us from ruin, and him thou didst willingly give. May I never deceive myself with the vain hope, that, while I continue in sin, thy mercy will spare me; when thou didst not spare thine own Son, who put himself in the place of sinners! May I never provoke, by transgression, thy justice! May

I never forget thy mercies, and the infinite condescension of thy blessed Son, who, for my redemption, humbled himself even to the death upon the cross.

1 John ii. 25.—*This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.*

How infinitely gracious is our God, to excite and encourage us in his service by the promise of immortal glory and bliss ! Give me a firm faith in thy gracious promises, that no pleasures may corrupt my heart, no difficulties discourage me from serving thee.

1 Cor. xi. 28.—*Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

That I am invited to thy holy table, is not because I am *worthy*, but because thou, O God, art infinitely *gracious* and *merciful*.—Have compassion on my infirmities ; accept of my sincere but imperfect resolutions. I acknowledge my unworthiness—I place all my hopes of acceptance in thy mercy and love, through Jesus my Redeemer—sincerely do I resolve to lead a new life—to use all diligence to secure the glorious privileges of my Christian vocation. With these sacred purposes, I presume to advance, O Lord, to thy altar ; trusting to thy mercy for the pardon of all my defects, and to thy powerful grace to quicken in me those holy dispositions which will make me an acceptable guest at thy holy table.

¶ Immediately before going up to the altar, use the following prayer :

O gracious and merciful God ! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ! look down from heaven, the throne of thy eternal glory, upon me thy unworthy servant, with the eyes of mercy and compassion. O Lord my God, I disclaim all merit ; I renounce all righteousness of my own ; and I fly for refuge, for pardon, and sanctification, to the righteousness of Jesus, thy anointed. For thy tender mercies' sake,

for the sake of the blessed Jesus, the Son of thy love, in whom thou art ever well pleased, have mercy upon me; receive my prayers; pardon my infirmities; strengthen my weak resolutions; guide my steps to thy holy altar, and there feed me with the meat that perisheth not, but endureth to everlasting life. *Amen.*

¶ Then advancing to the altar, and humbly kneeling down, use the following ejaculatory prayer before receiving the consecrated bread.

O my Lord and my God! may I receive this sacred symbol of thy crucified body in remembrance of the sacrifice of thy cross, trusting alone in thy infinite merits. By the power of thy grace may I be delivered from condemnation and death.

¶ When the minister repeats the words, *The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life*—seal this affecting petition by saying, secretly and fervently, *Amen*; and then reverently receive the consecrated bread with the right hand.*

¶ Then shall the priest first receive the communion in both kinds himself, and proceed to deliver the same to the bishops, priests, and deacons, in like manner, (if any be present) and, after that, to the people also in order into their hands, all devoutly kneeling; And when he delivereth the bread, he shall say,

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life: Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving.

[¶ Use the following ejaculation after receiving the consecrated bread:

Almighty is thy power; infinite thy mercy, blessed Jesus. Be it unto thy servant according unto thy word. O let thy body nourish and strengthen me unto everlasting life. Glory evermore be unto

* The receiving of the consecrated bread with the glove on the hand should be avoided as familiar and irreverent. Perhaps the most decent and proper manner of receiving the consecrated bread, is in the palm of the right hand, crossed over the left, and then lifted to the mouth

thee, Holy Jesus, the Author and Finisher of my salvation.

¶ Use the following ejaculation before receiving the consecrated cup:

I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will ratify my vows with this blood of the everlasting covenant; and devote myself for ever to thy service, O my God. Saviour of the world, evermore help and deliver me.

¶ When the minister repeats the words, *The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life*—seal this affecting petition by saying, secretly and fervently, *Amen.*]

¶ And the minister who delivereth the cup shall say,—

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life: Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

¶ Use the following ejaculation after receiving the cup:

All-powerful is the efficacy of thy precious blood, O my Saviour. May it purify my soul from sin, and be a fountain of pardon, peace, life eternal. Glory be unto thee, O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world. Blessed is he who receiveth by faith the symbols of thy love in thy church on earth. He shall celebrate the everlasting festival of love in thy heavenly kingdom. *Amen* and *Amen*.

¶ Then returning to your seat, use the following prayer:

Blessed Jesus! relying on thy mercy, I have bowed myself at thy table, to receive the precious pledges of thy dying love. O may thy presence go with me from thy holy altar, that when I return to the necessary labours and duties of the world, I may be enabled, by thy grace, to obey thy commandments, and to rejoice in the smiles of thy love. Guided by thy mercy through all the dangers and

trials of my pilgrimage, may I at length depart out of this world in peace, in a steadfast reliance on thy merits, in the joyful hope of the fruition of the glories of thy kingdom, O blessed Jesus; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, I render all the praise of my redemption. *Amen.*

¶ On Christmas-day, Easter-day, &c. add to your other devotions at the communion, the following.

¶ Upon Christmas-day, and seven days after.

I desire, O God, evermore to bless and praise thee for thy infinite love. For thou didst take compassion on mankind in his state of condemnation and misery, and didst send thy only Son into the world to instruct and guide us by his holy doctrine and example; to redeem us from sin, and to purchase for us everlasting happiness, by the sacrifice of his death. Grant, O Lord, that through the power of thy grace and heavenly benediction, I may fulfil the design of my Saviour's coming. "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, may I live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world," and thus be prepared to dwell for ever with thee, *O Father of mercies and God of all comfort*, in those mansions of bliss and glory which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. *Amen.*

¶ Upon Easter-day, and seven days after.

Blessed Jesus! who, by thy glorious resurrection from the dead, hast proved thyself to be the Son of God, hast triumphed over the power of darkness, and conquered death and the grave; keep me steadfast in the faith of thy holy name. Grant, O Lord, that, by the power of thy grace, I may rise from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness; may daily proceed in all virtue and godliness of living;

and departing this life in thy faith and fear, may finally have my perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting kingdom. *Amen.*

¶ Upon Ascension-day, and seven days after.

O blessed Jesus ! who, after thy conquest over death and hell, didst ascend in triumph to heaven, that thou mightest prepare for us mansions of eternal glory ; grant that the desires and affections of my soul may ascend after thee, and be supremely engaged with the contemplation of the glories of thy power and love. For "whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee." *Amen.*

¶ Upon Whit-sunday, and six days after.

O blessed Jesus ! who hast sent thy Holy Ghost to sanctify and comfort us. May my thoughts and desires, my ways and actions, evermore be directed by his divine guidance. Let him be unto me a spirit of *sanctification*, to purify my corrupt nature ; a *spirit of counsel* in all my difficulties ; of *direction* in all my doubts, fears, and scruples ; of *courage* in all my dangers ; of *constancy* and *consolation* to me under all my persecutions and sufferings, especially in time of sickness, and at the hour of death ; that, being governed and guided by his divine influence and direction, I may pass through all the changes and chances of this mortal life, and finally attain thy heavenly kingdom, there to reign with thee, blessed Jesus, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ Upon Trinity Sunday.

Glory be to thee, O God the Father, for creating me after thine own image, and for recovering me from a state of guilt and misery. Glory be to thee, O God the Son, for undertaking the wonderful work

of man's redemption, by assuming our miserable nature ; for the merits of thy suffering life ; and for the redeeming efficacy of thy death. Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, for thy miraculous gifts bestowed upon the apostles ; and for thy preventing, restraining, enlightening, consoling, and sanctifying grace. Blessing and honour, thanksgiving and praise, be unto thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

¶ At this most solemn and affecting ordinance, the communicant should be constantly engaged in acts of devotion. After he has received the elements, let him read the following meditations until the minister is ready to go on with the concluding portion of the service.

Rom. viii. 32.—He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?

O God ! the gift of thy only-begotten and beloved Son for the sins of a guilty world, is a sure pledge of thy infinite love. Thy mercy in Christ Jesus is my only solace *when my heart is in heaviness*. This is my only refuge, when dismayed by the view of my guilt, and the terrors of thy justice. Grant me, O Lord, all those graces and virtues which will qualify me for knowing and enjoying thee for ever, for Jesus Christ's sake, the Son of thy love.

2 Cor. v. 15.—*Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them.*

To thee, O my Saviour, I consecrate that life which thou hast redeemed by thy precious blood, from the slavery of sin and Satan. Fortify my soul, I beseech thee, against all the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, ~~that~~ with sincerity and devotion of heart, I may evermore serve thee.

Matt. xvi. 24.—*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.*

O my Saviour! who didst take upon thee the form of a servant, and, to redeem sinful man, didst bear his grief and carry his sorrows; let me not profess to follow thee, without endeavouring to follow the blessed steps of thy most holy life; to imitate thy patience, meekness, and humility; thy great disregard for the world, its pleasures, emoluments, and honours; thy lively compassion for the miseries of men; thy unwearied perseverance in doing good; thy constancy and fervour in prayer; thy supreme resignation to the will of thy Father. Being thus conformed in all things to thee, my Redeemer and Head, may I finally participate of the everlasting glories on which thou hast entered.

Matt. vi. 24.—*No man can serve two masters—ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

May I never set up any rival to thee, O God, in the possession of my heart. May I never attempt to reconcile thy service with the service of the world, *which is enmity with thee.* May I use it so as not to abuse it. May I ever make all its concerns subordinate to the concerns of my salvation. And convinced of the unsatisfying nature of its best enjoyments, may I ardently and supremely seek the enduring and satisfying joys of thy glorious presence.

2 Cor. vi. 16.—*Ye are the temple of the living God.*

Make me, O God, truly sensible of the great honour and blessing of being the habitation of thy good Spirit—of the great danger of profaning, by unholy passions, a temple consecrated to thee. Make me worthy of thy continual abode and presence. Take possession of my soul—bring all its powers into obedience to thy laws; and enable me to abound in all the fruits of the Spirit, that I may enjoy the exalted assurance that thou indeed dwellest in me.

Luke xv. 6.—*I have found my sheep which was lost.*

O thou good Shepherd ! I bless thee for thy tender care and compassion of thy lost sheep. I had indeed been for ever lost, had not thy love sought and found me when I was astray. For thy goodness sake, keep me from wandering from thy fold ; and exalt me in thy good time to that celestial fold, into which sin and sorrow never enter.]

¶ If the consecrated bread and wine be spent before all have communicated, the priest is to consecrate more, according to the form before prescribed ; beginning at—*All glory be to thee, Almighty God*—and ending with these words—*partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.*

¶ When all have communicated, the minister shall return to the Lord's table, and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth.

¶ Then shall the minister say the Lord's Prayer, the people repeating after him every petition.

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name ; Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven ; Give us this day our daily bread ; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us ; And lead us not into temptation ; But deliver us from evil : For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

¶ After shall be said as followeth :

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee, for that thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favour and goodness towards us ; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people ; and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and

do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in, through Jesus Christ our Lord ; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ Then shall be said or sung, all standing, *Gloria in Excelsis*, or some proper hymn from the Selection.

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good-will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesus Christ ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us : Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us : Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer : Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy ; thou only art the Lord ; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

¶ Then the priest (the bishop, if he be present) shall let them depart with this blessing :

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord : And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

[¶ After the blessing use the following prayer :

I bless thee, O God, for the spiritual nourishment with which thou hast strengthened and refreshed my soul. I bless thee, that through the crucified body and blood of thy Son, I am restored to thy favour. *Pardon the many imperfections of my services ; and*

grant me grace to fulfil the sacred vows of love and obedience which I have made to thee, my God and Father, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. *Amen.*]

¶ Collects that may be said after the collects of morning or evening prayer, or communion, at the discretion of the minister.

Assist us mercifully, O Lord, in these our supplications and prayers ; and dispose the way of thy servants towards the attainment of everlasting salvation ; that among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, they may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready help, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may, through thy grace, be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living ; to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help ; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name ; and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking ; we beseech thee to have compassion upon our infirmities ; and those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us, for the worthiness of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty God, who hast promised to hear the petitions of those who ask in thy Son's name ; we beseech thee mercifully to incline thine ears to us who have now made our prayers and supplications unto thee ; and grant, that those things which we

have faithfully asked according to thy will, may effectually be obtained ; to the relief of our necessity, and to the setting forth of thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Upon Sundays and other holy days (if there be no sermon or communion) shall be said all that is appointed at the communion, unto the end of the Gospel, concluding with the blessing. And if any of the consecrated bread and wine remain after the communion, it shall not be carried out of the church ; but the minister and other communicants shall, immediately after the blessing, reverently eat and drink the same.

¶ Upon your return home, retire to your closet to praise God for his mercies, and to supplicate his blessing in the following prayer :

I adore and praise thee, O God, for the rich blessings of thy covenant of mercy, through Jesus Christ, which thou hast sealed to my soul in that hallowed ordinance of which I have participated. I bless thee, O Lord, that having humbly and sincerely devoted myself to thee, and sealed my vows over the sacred symbols of the body and blood of thy Son, I can enjoy the exalted hope that thy mercy will be my constant solace ; thy grace my sure protection and reward. O how great is thy love, in thus providing for my perishing soul divine succours and consolations ! May the obligations of thy holy vows, the sacred claims of thy love, be ever present to my remembrance, and excite me diligently and earnestly to aim at serving and obeying thee. O may I not, by transgression, crucify afresh that Saviour whose sufferings I have commemorated, whose mercy I have experienced. Almighty God ! thou knowest the weakness of my nature, and the numberless temptations that encompass me ; evermore strengthen me by thy grace. Without thee I shall not be able to stand—O lead me by thy almighty arm—refresh my soul with the consolations of thy love—guide me to the end, in thy service ; and when my strength and my heart faileth, when my soul is sinking in the shades of death, be

thou, O Lord, the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. O my Saviour, visit me with thy salvation; let me see the felicity of thy chosen, and rejoice evermore in the gladness of thy people.
Amen.

¶ Let the communicant devote all the rest of the day which is not occupied with the public service of the church, to private acts of devotion; to meditating on the infinite mercy and love of his God and Saviour; to recalling to mind the sacred obligations to grateful and holy obedience which this hallowed ordinance has imposed upon him; and to earnestly and humbly imploring the succours of divine grace, that he may be sanctified both in soul and body, and may be so conducted "through things temporal, that he finally lose not the things that are eternal."]

FORMS
OF
DAILY DEVOTION.

(From Bishop Taylor.)

A FORM OF PRAYER FOR THE MORNING.

*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the
Holy Ghost—Our Father, &c.*

I.

MOST glorious and eternal God, Father of mercy and God of all comfort, I worship and adore thee with the lowest humility of my soul and body, and give thee all thanks and praise for thy infinite and eternal glories and perfections; and for the continual demonstration of thy mercies upon me, upon all mine, and upon thy holy Catholic Church.

II.

I acknowledge, O God, that I have deserved thy wrath and indignation. But thy mercy triumphing over thy justice and my sins, thou hast still continued to me life and time of repentance; thou hast opened to me the gates of grace and mercy; and perpetually called upon me to enter in, and to walk in the paths of a holy life, that I might glorify thee, and be glorified by thee eternally.

III.

Behold, O God, for this thy great and unspeakable goodness, for the preservation of me this night, and for all thy graces and blessings, I offer up my

soul and body, all that I am, and all that I have, as a sacrifice to thee and thy service ; humbly begging of thee to pardon all my sins, to defend me from all evil, to lead me into all good ; and let my portion be amongst thy redeemed ones, in the gathering together of the saints, in the kingdom of grace and glory.

IV.

Guide me, O Lord, in all the changes and varieties of the world ; that in all things that shall happen, I may have an evenness and tranquillity of spirit ; that my soul may be wholly resigned to thy divine will and pleasure ; never murmuring at thy gentle chastisements and fatherly correction, never waxing proud and insolent, though I feel a torrent of comforts and prosperous successes.

V.

Fix my thoughts, my hopes, and my desires upon heaven and heavenly things ; teach me to despise the world, to repent me deeply for my sins ; give me holy purposes of amendment, and divine strength and assistance to perform faithfully whatsoever I shall intend piously. Enrich my understanding with an internal treasure of divine truths, that I may know thy will ; and thou, who workest in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure, teach me to obey all thy commandments, to believe all thy revelations, and make me partaker of thy gracious promises.

VI.

Teach me to watch over all my ways, that I may never be surprised by sudden temptations, or a careless spirit, nor ever return to folly and vanity. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips, that I offend not in my tongue

neither against piety nor charity. Teach me to think of nothing but thee, and what is in order to thy glory and service ; to speak of nothing but thee and thy glories ; and to do nothing but what becomes thy servant, whom thy infinite mercy, by the graces of thy Holy Spirit, hath sealed up to the day of redemption.

VII.

Let all my passions and affections be so mortified and brought under the dominion of grace, that I may never by deliberation and purpose, nor yet by levity, rashness, or inconsideration, offend thy Divine Majesty. Make me such as thou wouldst have me to be ; strengthen my faith, confirm my hope, and give me a daily increase of charity ; that this day and ever I may serve thee according to all my opportunities and capacities, growing from grace to grace, till at last, by thy mercies, I shall receive the consummation and perfection of grace, even the glories of thy kingdom, in the full fruition of the face and excellencies of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; to whom be glory and praise, honour and adoration given by all angels, and all men, and all creatures, now and to all eternity. *Amen.*

¶ After which conclude with this ejaculation :

Now in all tribulation and anguish of spirit, in all dangers of soul and body, in prosperity and adversity, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, holy and most blessed Saviour, *Jesus*, have mercy upon me, save me and deliver me. *Amen.*

A FORM OF PRAYER FOR NOON

I.

O ETERNAL God, merciful and gracious, vouchsafe thy favour and thy blessing to thy servant : let the love of thy mercies, and the dread and fear of thy majesty, make me careful and inquisitive to search thy will, and diligently to perform it, and to persevere in the practices of a holy life, even till the last of my days.

II.

Keep me, O Lord, for I am thine by creation ; guide me, for I am thine by purchase ; thou hast redeemed me by the blood of thy Son, and loved me with the love of a Father ; for I am thy child by adoption and grace. Let thy mercy pardon my sins, thy providence secure me from the punishments and evils I have deserved, and thy care watch over me, that I may never any more offend thee. Make me in malice to be a child ; but in understanding, piety, and the fear of God, let me be a perfect man in Christ, innocent and prudent, readily furnished and instructed to every good work.

III.

Keep me, O Lord, from the destroying angel, and from the wrath of God. Let thy anger never rise against me ; but thy rod gently correct my follies, and guide me in thy ways ; and thy staff support me in all sufferings and changes. Keep all my senses entire till the day of my death ; and let my death be neither sudden, untimely, nor unprovided ; let it be after the common manner of men, having in it nothing extraordinary, but an extraordinary piety, and the manifestation of thy great and miraculous mercy.

IV.

Let no riches make me ever forget myself, no poverty ever make me forget thee. Let no hope or fear, no pleasure or pain, no accident without, no weakness within, hinder or discompose my duty, or turn me from the ways of thy commandments. O let thy Spirit dwell with me for ever, and make my soul just and charitable, full of honesty, full of religion, resolute and constant in holy purposes, but inflexible to evil. Make me humble and obedient, peaceable and pious. Let me never envy any man's good, nor deserve to be despised myself; and if I be, teach me to bear it with meekness and charity.

V.

Give me a tender conscience; a conversation discreet and affable, modest and patient, liberal and obliging; a body chaste and healthful; competency of living according to my condition; contentedness in all estates; a resigned will and mortified affections; that I may be as thou wouldst have me, and that my portion may be in the lot of the righteous, in the brightness of thy countenance, and the glories of eternity. *Amen.*

Holy is our God. Holy is the Almighty. Holy is the Immortal. Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts, have mercy upon me.

Our Father, who art in heaven, &c.

A FORM OF PRAYER FOR EVENING.

I.

O ETERNAL God, great Father of men and angels, who hast established the heavens and the earth in a wonderful order, making day and night to sue-

ceed each other ; I make my humble address to thy Divine Majesty, begging of thee mercy and protection this night and ever. O Lord, pardon all my sins, my light and rash words, the vanity and impiety of my thoughts, my unjust and uncharitable actions, and whatsoever sins I have committed against thee this day, or any time before. Behold, O God, my soul is troubled in the remembrance of my sins, in the frailty and sinfulness of my flesh, exposed to every temptation, and of itself not able to resist any. Lord God of mercy, I earnestly beg of thee to give me a great portion of thy grace, such as may be sufficient and effectual for the mortification of all my sins, and vanities, and disorders : that as I have formerly served my lust and unworthy desires, so now I may give myself up wholly to thy service and the studies of a holy life.

II.

Blessed Lord, teach me frequently and sadly to remember my sins ; and be thou pleased for Jesus my Redeemer's sake to remember them no more. Let me never forget thy mercies, and do thou still remember to do me good. Teach me to walk always as in thy presence. Ennoble my soul with great degrees of love to thee ; and impress on my spirit a great fear and veneration of thy holy name and laws ; that it may become the great employment of my whole life to serve thee, to advance thy glory, to root out all the habits of sin, that in holiness of life, in humility, in charity, in chastity, and in all the ornaments of grace, I may by patience wait for the coming of our Lord *Jesus*. *Amen*.

III.

Teach me, O Lord, to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom ; ever to remem-

ber my last end, that I may not dare to sin against thee. Let thy holy angels be ever present with me, to keep me in all my ways from the malice and violence of the spirits of darkness, from evil company, and the occasions and opportunities of evil, from all the ways of sinful shame, from the hands of all mine enemies, from a sinful life, and from despair in the hour of my death. Then, O blessed *Jesus*, shine gloriously upon me ; let thy mercies, and the light of thy countenance sustain me in my agonies, weaknesses, and temptations ; give me an opportunity of a prudent and spiritual guide, and of receiving the holy sacrament ; and let thy loving Spirit so guide me in the ways of peace and safety, that with the testimony of a good conscience, and the sense of thy mercies and grace, I may depart this life in the unity of the church, in the love of God, and a certain hope of salvation through thee, my Lord and blessed Saviour. *Amen.*

IV.

Into thy hands, most blessed *Jesus*, I commend my soul and body, for thou hast redeemed both with thy most precious blood. So bless and sanctify my sleep unto me, that it may be temperate, holy, and safe, a refreshment to my wearied body, to enable it so to serve my soul, that both may serve thee with a never-failing duty. O let me never sleep in sin or death eternal, but give me a watchful and a prudent spirit, that I may omit no opportunity of serving thee ; that whether I sleep or wake, live or die, I may be thy servant and thy child ; that when the work of my life is done, I may rest in the bosom of my Lord ; till by the voice of the archangel, the trump of God, I shall be awakened and called to sit down and feast at the eternal supper of the Lamb. *Grant this, O Lamb of God, for the honour of thy*

mercies, and the glory of thy name, O most merciful Saviour and Redeemer *Jesus. Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

Psalm cxxi. 1, &c.—I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved : he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth *Israel* shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper : the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, neither the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil : he shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

To your Evening Devotions add the following Act of Intercession.

O GOD of infinite mercy, who hast compassion on all men, and relievest the necessities of all that call to thee for help ; hear the prayers of thy servant, who is unworthy to ask any petition for himself, yet in humility and duty is bound to pray for others.

O let thy mercy descend upon the whole church ; preserve her in truth and peace, in unity and safety ; that offering to thy glory the never-ceasing sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, she may advance the honour of her Lord, and be filled with his Spirit, and partake of his glory. *Amen.*

Bless all Christian rulers, and grant them grace, wisdom, and understanding, to execute justice, and to maintain truth. *Amen.*

Bless those who minister in holy things. Clothe them with salvation, that the people may rejoice. *Amen.*

Let all my family and kindred, my neighbours and friends, receive the benefit of my prayers, and the blessings of thy favour; the comforts and supports of thy providence, and the sanctification of thy Spirit. *Amen.*

Relieve and comfort all the persecuted and afflicted; speak peace to troubled consciences; strengthen the weak; confirm the strong; instruct the ignorant; deliver the oppressed from him that spoileth him; and relieve the needy that hath no helper; and bring us all, by the waters of comfort, and in the ways of righteousness, to the kingdom of rest and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

To your Devotions on Sunday add the following.

(From Bishop Andrews.)

THROUGH the tender mercy of our God, the day-spring from on high hath visited us.

Blessed be thy name, O Lord, for that light which no darkness ever overspreads, that sun which never goes down.

O thou who, on this day, didst rise again, raise up my soul to newness of life; grant me repentance from dead works, and plant me in the likeness of thy resurrection.

And thou, O Father and God of peace, who didst bring again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ,

that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant; make me perfect in every good work to do thy will, working in me that which is well pleasing in thy sight, through Jesus Christ.

O thou who didst also on this day of the week send down on thy apostles thy most Holy Spirit; take not the same Spirit away from us; but grant to all thy servants who ask it of thee, that they may be daily renewed, and more plentifully enriched with the same.

O Lord, who, by choosing this day for these most important, most beneficial events, didst direct thy apostles to call it, and to make it thy holy day; grant that by imploring thy grace, and celebrating thy praise on this holy day; by praising and reading thy word; and by attending on the public assemblies of thy saints in the house where thy honour dwelleth; I may be prepared for that eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God, of which the sacred rest of this day is a figure and a pledge—and for joining in the eternal hymns of angels and blessed spirits in the life to come; ascribing unto God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, honour and praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SHORT EJACULATIONS.

In the Morning, when you first awake and see the Light.

I BLESS thee, O Lord, for watching over me this night, and for bringing me to enjoy the comforts of another day. Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.

WHEN YOU GET UP.

I laid me down and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord sustained me. O let me awake unto righteousness, and arise from the dead, that Christ may give me light.

WHEN YOU LIE DOWN AT NIGHT.

I will lay me down in peace, to take my rest. O my God, under the shadow of thy wings make me to dwell in safety.

IN THE CHURCH, BEFORE DIVINE SERVICE.

O Lord, pardon my sins, and receive my prayers; and may the truths of salvation here proclaimed make me wise unto salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

AFTER DIVINE SERVICE.

O Lord, pardon the imperfections both of my prayers and praises, and incline me not only to hear thy word, but to obey the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

GRACE BEFORE MEAT.

Bless, O Lord, we beseech thee, this refreshment to our use, and us to thy service, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

GRACE AFTER MEAT.

For this and every other mercy, O God, thy holy name be praised, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

DIRECTIONS TO COLLECTS AND PSALMS,

IN THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER,

PROPER TO BE USED BY THE COMMUNICANT IN HIS PRIVATE
DEVOTION.

	<i>Collects. See—</i>
For God's assistance in the performance of our duty,	{ 1st Sunday after Epiphany, 9th after Trinity.
For deliverance from, and support under, afflictions,	{ 3d Sunday after Epiphany, 8th after Trinity, 5th in Lent.
For the universal church,	{ 5th Sunday after Epiphany, St. John Evangelist, 2d for Good Friday, 16th and 22d after Trinity.
For peace and unity of the church,	{ 5th Sunday after Trinity, St. Simon and St. Jude, See <i>Ministers</i> .
For contrition, Against covetousness,	{ Ash Wednesday. St. Matthew's Day.
For conversion from sin,	{ 1st Sunday in Advent, 1st after Easter, St. Andrew's Day, St. James' Day, St. Matthew's Day.
For the benefit of Christ's death,	{ The Annunciation.
For a right and firm faith,	{ Trinity Sunday, St. Thomas, and St. Mark.
For faith, hope, and charity,	{ 14th Sunday after Trinity.
For grace and assistance in our spiritual course,	{ 2d Sunday in Lent, 4th in Advent, Easter-Day, 1st, 2d, and 13th after Trinity.
For eternal happiness,	{ 1st Sunday in Advent, Epiphany, 6th Sunday after Epiphany, Sunday after Ascension Day.
For humility and patience, For imitation of Christ,	{ Sunday before Easter. 2d Sunday after Easter. St. Stephen's Day, St. Philip's Day, St. James' Day, St. John Baptist's Day, All Saints Day.

242 DIRECTIONS TO COLLECTS AND PSALMS.

Collects.

For deliverance from judgments,	{ Septuagesima Sunday, 4th Sunday in Lent.
For the love of God and his laws,	{ 4th Sunday after Easter, 1st, 6th, 7th, and 14th, after Trinity.
For love and charity,	{ Quinquagesima Sunday.
For the ministers of God's word and sacraments,	{ St. Matthias' Day, St. Peter's Day, 3d Sunday in Advent.
For mortification,	{ The Circumcision, and Easter-Day.
For the protection of God's providence,	{ 2d, 3d, 4th, and 20th Sundays after Trinity.
For purity of heart,	{ The Purification.
For pardon of sin,	{ 12th, 21st, and 24th Sundays after Trinity.
For acceptance of our prayers,	{ 10th Sunday after Trinity.
For renovation,	{ Christmas-Day.
To be truly religious,	{ 7th Sunday after Trinity.
For Christian resolution,	{ St. John Baptist's Day.
For sincerity,	{ 3d Sunday after Easter.
Before reading the Scriptures,	{ 2d Sunday in Advent.
Against evil thoughts,	{ 5th after Easter.
For deliverance from, and support under, temptations,	{ 4th after Epiphany, 2d in Lent.
For fruitfulness in good works,	{ 5th after Easter, 1st, 9th, 11th, 13th, 17th, and 25th after Trinity.

Psalms,

For God's assistance in our sacramental preparation,	23, 26, 111.
For the gift and grace of repentance,	6, 25, 32, 38.
Before self-examination,	139.
For confession of sins, and for forgiveness,	6, 32, 38, 51.
An act of contrition,	25.
On a resolution to lead a new life,	1, 23, 24, 25, 126.
For faith in God's mercy through Christ's death,	19, 57.
For a thankful remembrance of Christ's death,	2, 3, 4, 103.
For the grace of charity,	15, 41, 112, 133.
For grace to love God's law,	19, 119.
For a holy life,	85.
For salvation and eternal happiness,	16, 24.
For God's care and protection,	37.
For the comfort of God's holy Spirit,	34.
For humility,	131.
Thanksgiving for God's mercies,	103, 136, 138.
For pardon of sins,	85, 106, 116.
For redemption by Christ,	98, 118.
Against evil and perplexing thoughts,	6, 34, 42, 43, 102.
On Christmas-Day, and seven days after,	19, 45, 85.
Easter-Day, and seven days after,	2, 57, 111.
Whitsunday, and six days after,	34, 42, 43, 51.
Trinity Sunday,	2, 47, 72, 110.
For the grace of perseverance,	86, 119.
For the morning,	4, 16, 17, 23, 86.
For the evening,	119, 130, 138.
The seven Penitential Psalms are the 6th, 32d, 38th, 51st, 102d, 130th, and 143d.	

Our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount is the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of St Matthew.

THE EIGHT BEATITUDES. *St. Matt. chap. v. ver. 3, &c.*

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.
8. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

NOTE A, FOR PAGE 175.

It may not be amiss to present to the reader the following passages from the writings of the Fathers, which, with many others that might be produced, decisively prove, that the primitive church was episcopal.

FIRST CENTURY.

IGNATIUS, *Bishop of Antioch, in his Epistle to the Trallians.*

"Continue inseparable from Jesus Christ our God, and from your *bishop*, and from the commands of the apostles. He that is within the altar is pure; but he that is *without*, that is, does any thing without the *bishop*, and *presbyters*, and *deacons*, is not pure in his conscience."

In his Epistle to the Smyrnians.

"Let no man do any thing of what belongs to the church without the *bishop*. It is not lawful, *without the bishop*, neither to baptize, nor to celebrate the holy communion."

SECOND CENTURY.

IRENÆUS, *Bishop of Lyons.*

"We can reckon up those whom the apostles ordained to be *bishops* in the several churches, and who they were that *succeeded* them down to our times."^{*}

CLEMENS, *of Alexandria.*

"There are other precepts without number; some which relate to *presbyters*; others which belong to *bishops*; others respecting *deacons*."[†]

THIRD CENTURY.

ORIGIN, *of Alexandria.*

"There is a debt due to *deacons*; another to *presbyters*; and another to *bishops*, which is the greatest of all, and exacted by the *Saviour of the whole church*."[‡]

CYPRIAN, *Bishop of Carthage.*

"The church is built on *bishops*, and every act of the church is *governed and directed* by them, its *presidents*."[§]

^{*} *Irenæus, lib. iii. cap. 5.*
[‡] *Origin, lib. arsi. c. 15.*

[†] *Pædag. lib. iii. cap. 12.*
[§] *Cyprianus, principio epist. 55.*

The testimony of St. Jerome, in the fourth century, has been supposed, by some, to militate against episcopacy. In his comment on the first chapter of Titus, he advances only as a conjecture, "that the churches were at first governed by a college of *presbyters*, equal in rank and dignity. Afterwards, divisions being occasioned by this parity among presbyters, when every presbyter began to claim, as his own particular subjects, those whom he had baptized; and it was said by the people, *I am of Paul*, and *I of Apollos*, and *I of Cephas*; to remedy this evil, it was ordered, all the world over, that one of the presbyters in every church should be set over the rest, and peculiarly called *bishop*." But it is evident, that in this passage, St. Jerome plainly refers the degree by which bishops were established over presbyters, to the time of the apostles. He not only assigns, as the occasion of it, the adherence of some to Paul, of others to Apollos, of others to Cephas, which is reproved by St. Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians; but in his epistle to Evagrius, he expressly calls the distinction of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, *an apostolic institution*, and taken by the apostles from the Old Testament, where Aaron, his sons the priests, and the Levites, correspond to the three orders of the Christian church. In his catalogue of ecclesiastical writers, he affirms, "that James was ordained bishop of Jerusalem by the *apostles*"; that Timothy was made bishop of Ephesus, and Titus of Crete, by St. Paul; and Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, by St. John," &c. Even in St. Jerome's opinion, therefore, the primacy of bishops over presbyters was an apostolic institution. Yet, were the opinion of St. Jerome otherwise, the opinion of a single Father, in the fourth century, ought not certainly to be adduced against the concurring testimony of all the earlier Fathers.

The primitive church, beyond all doubt, was episcopal. The bishops alone possessed the power of ordination transmitted from Christ, the head of the church, that spiritual power which can be derived from him alone. If, then, presbyters, who never received authority to ordain, were to exercise this power, the ministerial commission which they would confer, would not be derived in the appointed channel from Christ, and of course would not be sanctioned by him. The mode established by Christ and his apostles, of conveying ministerial power in the church to "the end of the world," cannot be altered by any human authority.

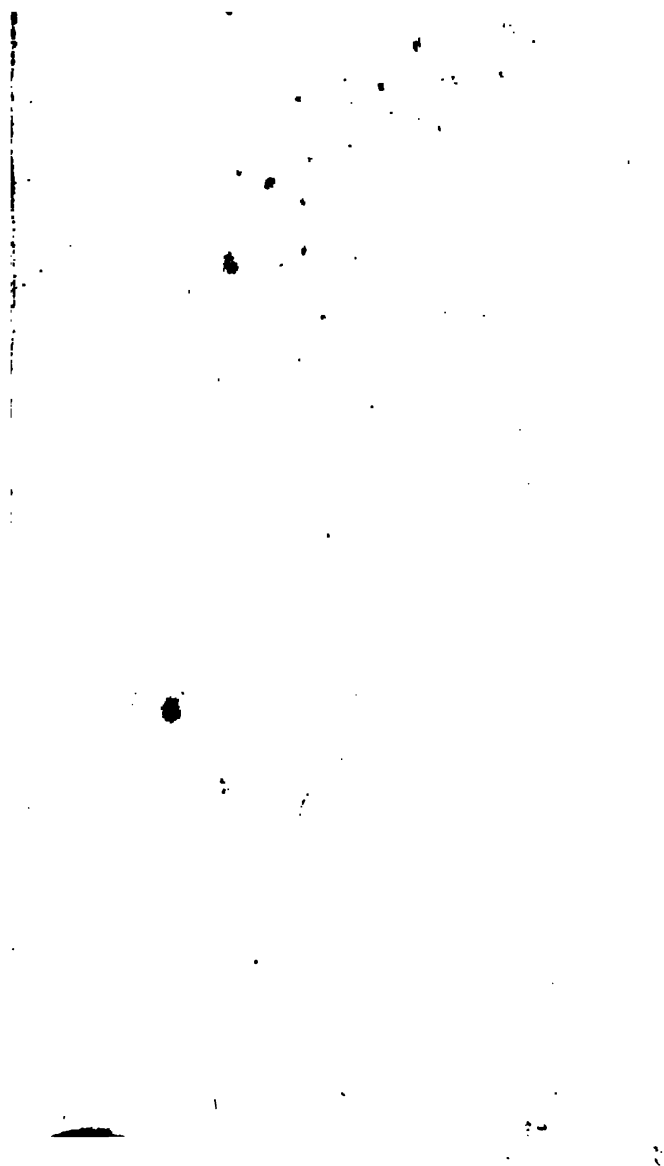
The reader who is in doubt on this subject, certainly one of the most important that can engage his attention, is earnestly requested candidly and seriously to peruse Potter on Church Government, and Law's Three Letters to the Bishop of Bangor, which last are published in the Scholar Armed. The former of these writers, by a luminous series of testimony from Scripture and the primitive Fathers, proves that the original constitution of the church was episcopal; and the latter, in a masterly strain of argument, defends this truth against all the objections with which it can be assailed. United, they place the episcopal constitution of the church on the firm foundation of Scripture, antiquity, and sound reason.

The opinion advanced by Sir Peter King, and since by others, that a bishop was originally the head of only one congregation, and possessed no diocesan authority, is entirely refuted and exposed by Slater, in his Original Draught on the Primitive Church. And much valuable information on this subject may be found in *A Guide to the Church*, by Charles Daubeny, L. L. D. a presbyter of the Church of England.

The principles advanced in this Companion for the Altar, on the subject of the Christian ministry, having been violently assailed, the author found it necessary to vindicate them in "An Apology for Apostolic Order and its Advocates."

THE END.





1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.







